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I.

A HOME RESERVE ARMY.

II.

THE MORE ECONOMIC MILITARY TENURE OF INDIA.

III.

CAVALRY AS AFFECTED BY BREECHLOADING ARMS.

LONDON
PRINTED BY SPOTTISWOODE AND CO.
NEW-STREET SQUARE

THREE MAIN MILITARY QUESTIONS OF THE DAY:

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BY

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MAJOR UNATTACHED.

LONDON:

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

1867.

(1833.)

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THREE MAIN MILITARY QUESTIONS
OF
THE DAY.

CHAPTER I.

OUR MOST URGENT MILITARY WANT—ITS REMEDY AN EFFICIENT ARMY OF RESERVE.

RECENT EVENTS in Germany, the sudden collapse of the vast military power of Austria, the conquests made by Prussia, that have changed the face of the map of Europe in a month, have at last roused the spirit of enquiry, so long dormant in England, as to our own military position. Men the least liable to panic ask each other, and not before it was time, How are *we* prepared if a similar attack threatened us? Are we safe from a like catastrophe? Undoubtedly, it is salutary and opportune that this question should come home to us just now. In respect of engendering a false confidence, our latest great military achievement, the splendid, brilliant, but comparatively easy reconquest of India in 1859, has done us harm rather than good. Content to believe that having come safely through that crisis, our means are sufficient to overcome any other, we have been enjoying a repose not justified by the facts of our position; sleeping, it may be, on a charged mine that requires but the application o the match to involve us at any moment in ruin. Or supposing the crisis that may suddenly overtake us to be overcome by the energy and vast resources that have proved sufficient before, certainly the least effect of

such disaster would be the putting back of all successful progress amongst us for many generations.

The flattering result of our easy successes in India has effaced the recollection of the reverses in the Crimea; by far the more profitable, if not the more pleasant remembrance of the two, to have retained in our memory till all causes for the possible repetition of like misfortune should have been removed. *Are* they so removed? We think not; and it is in the hope that, under the interest excited by the recent spectacle of our neighbour's calamity, our awakening may come before it is too late, and that calm well-considered organic reform, carried steadily out while we have the leisure of peace, may place us for ever beyond the reach of those recent periodical panics so discreditable to a great nation, that the ideas these pages embody are committed to paper.

A clever military periodical has lately predicted that before many weeks are over, the Horse Guards will be filled with the detailed reports of our sharp-sighted officers who have accompanied the German armies, but that Routine will have its way, will just carelessly read the reports, docket them, and put them quietly away for another ten years,—betaking itself with a sigh of relief from the dry bones of dull matters of organisation to some more congenial study.

We do not share the gloomy apprehensions of this prophet of evil. To do so would be rendering scant justice to a Commander-in-Chief who has shown himself ever alive to the real interests of the Army, and most readily progressive in adopting the improvements suggested by experience, from whatever source. Nor would it be in accordance with the hopes the country has a right to form of the future policy of a Secretary of State for the War Department who has already shown his quick appreciation of one of the changes required, and given promise of energetic action for the future, by completing

his predecessor's order for the manufacture of breech-loading rifles up to the figure of 200,000.

Still, from the nature of things with us, the impetus for any radical change of organisation must be *extra*-departmental; that is, must first be approved by public opinion, and then gradually find favour within the walls of official departments. It is both constitutional and right that it should be so. It is for the national voice to indicate the direction in which it is willing, with the keenest instinct for its own safety, to incur national expense. It is in the hope, therefore, of inviting public attention to the examination of one or two of the main points on which a vast field for improvement of military organisation is open to us, that these notes, imperfect in themselves, but perhaps containing material that may be suggestive to others, are put forward.

The writer's inferences from his facts may be crude or actually incorrect—he makes no pretension to exhaust even a part of his subject—but it is possible that the new connection and juxtaposition in which the mass of historical facts and figures he has collected are brought together, may lead better heads to sounder conclusions. Thus his labour will not be in vain.

The events of the last few months in Germany teach no more forcible lesson than that no amount of bravery or military spirit alone will avail a nation in the hour of its need. That there must be a carefully organised system thoughtfully elaborated and fitted in all its parts in time of peace, so that each of the constituent elements of national defence may fall at once, at a few hours' notice, into its allotted place, familiarly and habitually known long beforehand, before a nation can, in these days, be justified in calmly awaiting the approach of war. We see the Prussian army so organised that in a week it could put 600,000 men under arms. And these men have proved to be, on better information, not, as

public opinion at first supposed them, mere levies of rustics hastily called out and armed, but each individual, in his separate class, mainly disciplined trained soldiers.

It is needless to go into the details of this organisation. The admirable articles of the 'Times' Military Correspondents from the seat of war have made these details familiar in every household in the land. The question for our consideration is, CAN *OUR* SYSTEM, WITHOUT ANY GREAT RADICAL UNCONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE IN THE MODE OF VOLUNTARY ENLISTMENT, BE ASSIMILATED TO THIS?

In England it is folly to talk of conscription, or even of any modification of that continental mode of raising gigantic armies. Any change for the better with us must be one that shall not violate, but on the contrary foster, and go hand in hand with, the national sentiment in favour of voluntary military service.

Balloting for the Militia might again be enforced in the face of a great and actually present national danger, which should prepare the popular mind for submitting to such a measure temporarily. But in these days such a measure could only be made acceptable to the national mind —either as a last resource, *or* as part of a system which, starting from the principle of the equal obligation in the eye of the law of every Englishman without exception to personal military service, should be so contrived that every man of the due age should be held bound to contribute his share to the national defence, either in the Army, the Militia, or the Volunteers. The pertinent question arises, moreover, would not the tardy national acceptance of the ballot for service come too late to be of use against the threatening danger? For suppose a ballot to be suddenly preferred to the alternative of national degradation before an invader, *it would not give us the thing we want.* IT IS SOME THOUSANDS OF TRAINED SOLDIERS AVAILABLE TO COMPLETE OUR FIRST LINE OF DEFENCE TO 100,000 OR MORE, EXCLUSIVE OF GARRISONS, AT A FEW HOURS'

NOTICE; NOT A MASS OF MEN CALLED HASTILY FROM THE MULTIPLIED PURSUITS OF PEACE INTO THE RANKS OF THE MILITIA —HOWEVER WILLING, BRAVE, AND PUBLIC-SPIRITED THESE LEVIES MIGHT BE—THAT WOULD BE REQUIRED TO MEET OUR INSTANT WANTS IN CASE OF INVASION. It is very important to get a clear idea of what our exact want is. As we shall show further on, a system that might give us the means of putting 100,000 additional, but almost wholly untrained men, in forty-eight hours into the ranks of the Militia, might not—probably *would* not—meet our most urgent want. It might strengthen our third line of reserve, and yet leave our *first* line—the Regular Army at home, by whom the whole brunt of the first shock of invasion would be borne—altogether too weak. Therefore, it is well to be very exact as to the actual nature of our most urgent military want.

The two classes from which we can draw men for military service.

As long as England is constituted as she is, as long as the demands of our commercial and political interests require an army for foreign service all the world over, *our military resources as to men will divide themselves into two distinct and totally separate classes*: First, those willing and able to do the rough, comparatively ill-paid work of mere watchmen and care-takers, performed by our Line Regiments, in every remote colony and climate where the British flag flies. And, secondly, those superior in social position who are ready to sacrifice all pecuniary considerations and give their time and money—terms synonymous with most of them—freely, to meet such national danger as invasion, but whom it would be unreasonableness and mere folly to expect ever to make available for protracted foreign service, or even long embodiment at home. This natural and *unalterable* division of the nation into two classes of men for the supply of what we may call our ordinary and our extraordinary or exceptional states of military service, ought to be kept prominently in view in all schemes for defence. And this brings us at once to

For Foreign service.

For Home defence.

The two great divisions of our military force.

the consideration of our two grand divisions of force, which follow the same natural rule; the regular Foreign service army—and the Home defence; each of which should of course have its recognised, distinct, and ever-available reserve for the supply of casualties, and to admit of its ready expansion on sudden emergency. We require then:

Drawn from the labouring class.

Drawn from all classes of society.

1st Line. A Regular Foreign Service Army.
2nd Line. Its Reserve for Foreign Service.
3rd Line. An army for Home Defence.
4th Line. Reserve for the Home Army.

Three out of these four lines of defence we have already, each admirable in its way, viz. the first on our list—constituted of the Guards, the Line, and the Depôt Battalions. The third place on our list belongs, we should say without question, to the long-established and thoroughly Constitutional Home Defence, the Militia. The splendid army of Volunteers, 180,000 strong, capable of being doubled on emergency, answers all our requirements in the fourth place.

Our total deficiency of a Second Line of defence.

But where are we to look in our military system for any semblance of the SECOND; *for a ready Reserve for the regular army for immediate foreign service?* The answer must be, that *no such class or Reserve exists.* There is nominally borne on the books an Army of Reserve, which now actually numbers 2,081 effective men; but even if these were worth mentioning in point of number, they would not answer our special requirement, for as at present constituted *they are not liable to foreign service.*

We have always looked on the Militia as the Reserve of our First Line.

Our practice has always looked upon the Militia as the Reserve for our foreign service army; and in war time they have always loyally responded to the calls made upon them, and under the inducement of liberal bounties have given large drafts of partially trained men to our regular armies in the field. This they would doubtless do as freely again; but not to speak of the enormous expense

of these war-price bounties, the system—if so irregular and exceptional a state of things may be called a system—would *not* supply the possible need we have been contemplating, because, not only would the men thus given to the line not be trained soldiers, unless at a time when the whole Militia had itself spent one or more years in an embodied state; *but in the case of invasion the Militia regiments called out en masse would themselves want all their men.* Therefore, the supposition that the Militia can at all times give a Reserve to our Regular Army, being subject to the derangement that in time of invasion we should require to fill two demands from but one source of supply that could only give the men to one branch at one time—that is either to the Line *or* to the Militia, *but not to both simultaneously*, is based on a false and erroneous conclusion, and falls to the ground. **Grave defects of that system.**

THE FACT IS, THEREFORE, THAT WE HAVE NO SUCH THING AS A READY RESERVE OF TRAINED SOLDIERS FOR THE SUDDEN REINFORCEMENT OR EXPANSION OF OUR REGULAR FOREIGN SERVICE ARMY. And it is to the means of remedying so glaring a deficiency, and supplying this most important element of national power, either for defence, or, if needs be, for Offence, that these notes propose mainly to address themselves. Too much importance cannot possibly be attached to this part of our system. For, the want of this second line—or the weakness of this connecting link between our first and our third and fourth lines—might easily involve the breaking down of the whole chain of our national defence.

If our first and second lines are not sufficiently numerous, together, to withstand the first shock of invasion, and to check its progress for a time, it is quite possible that the third and fourth lines would never be given the opportunity of being brought effectively to bear.

For want of sufficient resisting power in the first two lines, disaster might overwhelm us before we had had the

three weeks of breathing-time necessary to give our third and fourth lines sufficient solidity to meet a highly organised and efficient enemy.

Strength of our various elements of defence at present.

And first, that we may know precisely what *we want*, let us go a little into detail as to what *we have*.

We have, then, first, a Regular Army comprising 184,768 men; of whom (the rest being habitually employed in India and the Colonies) only 66,130 * (our First line) are available at Home, and on these *alone*, therefore, as free from any other permanent demand, can we count for the purpose of our calculation.

Second line or Reserve to the first.

Second, a Reserve force—the only approach we possess to the gigantic reserves of foreign armies—of

	13,328	Enrolled Pensioners.
	2,081	men of the 'Army of Reserve.'
Total . .	15,409	

But none of these are available for foreign service, except under a new bargain with the State.

Third line.

Third, a Militia Force in the three Kingdoms and the Channel Islands, of

	14,621	Artillery.
	110,841	Infantry, and
	13,265	Yeomanry Cavalry.†
Total Militia .	138,727	

Fourth line.

Fourth, The admirable Volunteer Force of

	32,010	Artillery.
	145,685	Infantry, and
	1,268	Cavalry and Mounted Rifles.
Total . .	178,963	

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* Depôts exclusive of artillery	6,828
Artillery, Cavalry, Guards, and Line at home . .	59,302
Total	66,130

† The Yeomanry are all 'Volunteers' in the truest sense of the word; but they are here for convenience classed with the Militia.

In all some 399,229 Combatants; but only 81,539 * of these of such previous training, discipline, and experience of war as to qualify them, at once, to stand in first line, and these subject to the large deductions stated in the foot-note to this page. Doubtless many of the best Volunteer regiments are quite up to this standard also, and no one can question that two or three weeks of actual campaigning in the field would bring the greater number of them up to it. But we must not allow this reasonable expectation of their *future* efficiency to draw us away from a critical examination of what part each item of our military power is *at this present* capable of having *at once assigned to it in the resistance of the first shock of war.*

The existing Army of Reserve.

As to the item Army of Reserve 2,081 men, we will undertake to say that its very existence is unknown to the generality of people in England. Yet it is, next to the Regular Army at home, the most important link in the chain of our national defence, containing as it does the only immediately available body of trained soldiers ready to fill casualties in, or expand the numbers of, the Regular Army (our first line).

The Enrolled Pensioners.

Of the Enrolled Pensioners (13,328) we would speak in terms of the greatest respect. They constitute a body of as brave and tried soldiers as any in the world; but their day is past for active field operations. Their breasts glitter with the proud tokens of many a well-fought field;

* Viz. Regulars	66,130
Reserve and Pensioners	15,409
Total of trained soldiers . .	81,539
Deduct for garrisons	20,000
Deduct for sick and non-effective; that is, Engineers, Military Train, Commissariat, and other Staff Corps—at least	6,000
Total effective for the field—and these divided over England, Ireland, and Scotland—not more than	55,539

as an example and object of emulation to younger soldiers their deeds are a national inheritance; but they cannot, from the age and infirmity of many of their number, be counted upon for hard marching and fighting. They would as far as their numbers go form an excellent garrison for our fortresses and naval arsenals.

Small effective strength of our first line.

Thus, deducting at least 20,000 of the soldiers we have enumerated, to be supplemented by 49,000 Militia and to form together with them the garrisons of strategic point of importance,* we can count on no more than some 55,000 TRAINED MEN TO PUT IN OUR FIRST LINE OF BATTLE TO MEET INVASION.

It is not sufficient that we have in round numbers some 290,000 more to compose our third and fourth lines.

For no attempt would ever be made on these islands with less than 300,000 men; and these would certainly be the best the hostile power could furnish. Events quite fresh in our memories have shown with what rapidity heavy blows follow the first threat of war in these days. The want of an effective *second* line, or ready reserve to the first, of equal military quality with it, would probably cause the break-down of the whole system.

Our strength for war abroad.

Or, to look at our necessities from another point of view—suppose—may it be averted, but it is a contingency which the most peace-loving amongst us cannot altogether dismiss from calculation; suppose that we should be forced, in spite of our best endeavours to the contrary, to take part in another war on a large scale on the continent of Europe or America. Irrespective of our forces now in India, which we leave aside for the present, we could certainly not spare immediately more than 40,000 to 45,000 men to back our policy abroad. What are this handful to any Continental or American army? Are we always to play the subordinate part that covered us with

* The Royal Commission on Defence in 1860, named 69,000 as the number required to garrison our fortresses and seaports.

unnecessary and undeserved discredit in the Crimea? And while our brave men are perishing and wasting away in attempting objects that become physical impossibilities to their small numbers, are others again to carry off all the honour in the face of the world? Are we 'unready English' always to take all the hardest knocks, and acquire the least gain? *This is what our total destitution of a Reserve of trained soldiers exposes us to at any time.*

OUR MOST URGENT AND IMMEDIATE WANT, THEN, RESOLVES ITSELF INTO THIS:—THAT BEFORE WE CAN REST SECURE AT HOME, OR PREFER CLAIM TO HAVE A VOICE IN THE COUNCILS OF NATIONS AND TO BE CONSULTED IN THE AFFAIRS OF THE WORLD ABROAD, WE REQUIRE A RESERVE OF AT LEAST 35,000 TO 45,000 ADDITIONAL TRAINED SOLDIERS, TO RAISE THE TOTAL NUMBER THAT WE COULD PUT INTO FIRST LINE FOR FIELD OPERATIONS AT TWENTY-FOUR HOURS' NOTICE, EXCLUSIVE OF GARRISONS, TO 100,000 EFFECTIVE DISCIPLINED MEN.

It is important to mark, from what has gone before, *that this is plainly our greatest need*, **AND NOTHING ELSE.** With 100,000 men of this quality, ready at forty-eight hours' notice, we could afford the three or four weeks of breathing-time necessary to bring our partially-trained 3rd line Militia and 4th line Volunteers up to the requisite standard of efficiency. *Without* the 35,000 to 45,000 trained soldiers we thus ask for, that number would have to be drawn at once into battle from one of the other less highly disciplined bodies; then the weakness and failure of this one less tempered link in our chain might involve the destruction or overthrow of the whole. **THE SIMPLE REMEDY FOR THIS GREAT WANT IS TO CREATE A RESERVE FORCE, ON THE NUCLEUS OF THE PRESENT NOMINAL ONE, FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE THAT PRUSSIA HAS SET US.** The men of such a Reserve would remain ordinarily at their homes, absorbed in peace time in the population, and following industrial occupations, but able to stand to

A Reserve force. How ordinarily employed.

their arms, and to take their places in or beside the Line, at forty-eight hours' notice. And decidedly, considering either of the contingencies spoken of above, the latter figure would be the safer of the two for us to have thus available and at hand. 45,000 such Reserve men would give us, added to our 55,000 Regulars, for the first line of home defence, 100,000 men; or for forced intervention abroad, some 80,000 regular troops, if stern necessity should drag us into such intervention. And a modest enough force this would be, it must be confessed, side by side with the tremendous power of rapid expansion of their armies that the systems of foreign nations already possess, and are now hourly engaged in improving. Still, small in number though it be, our immense resources in money and material ought to make such an army, together with the highest state of efficiency in arms and instruction of which each individual is capable, a power to which the honour of England might be worthily entrusted.

What it would do for us.

On the question of the well-arranged system that should blend these 100,000 trained soldiers at short notice into one harmonious whole with our 300,000 Militia and Volunteers, making the united mass a machine perfectly fitted in all its parts, and readily movable at a single will for national defence, these notes do not propose to touch. On the local allotment of our vast total force into districts and corps d'armée, then again into divisions and brigades, each with its well-known commander and staff; on the means of transport and systematic distribution for feeding them, and keeping them equipped and efficient for the field, with ammunition, camp equipage, and medical stores, so that not only should each man fall readily into the precise place previously consigned to him, but that he should find, on arrival at the place of rendezvous, a perfect machinery of supply in operation for preserving him at

These notes do not touch on a comprehensive organisation of our defence.

the highest pitch of vigour and efficiency—these suggestions do not profess to treat. These are questions foreign to our immediate purpose, which is simply to point out an economical and ready method of getting the *men* we want to complete our First Line to the number at which it ought to be kept.

Doubtless some plan embracing all the points mentioned above exists in the War Department, and has been thoughtfully elaborated in all its details; though, certainly, it may be wisely, no whisper of it has reached the public. THESE NOTES TREAT MORE IMMEDIATELY THE QUESTION OF HOW WE ARE TO LAY HANDS ON THE 35,000 TO 45,000 TRAINED SOLDIERS WHOM WE ARE PROVED TO WANT, BUT WHOM WE HAVE *not—and whom no part of our present system can readily supply.* **Such a plan no doubt exists.**

NOW, WHERE *ARE* THEY TO BE HAD?

Fortunately this question is not difficult to answer. Two great sources of supply exist, which under judicious management will, in combination, give us the full number we require within eighteen months.

First.—It is only necessary that we should recognise and foster one great supply that in our shortsighted military policy we have always neglected,—namely, the discharged 'ten years' men;—and one half, or more, of the whole complement required are ready to our hand in a few weeks, say within six months. **Where the men we want may be got.** **The ten years' men.**

Secondly.—The reduction of our present overgrown and in great part unnecessary permanent British force in India,—A REDUCTION TO BE EFFECTED NOT MERELY IN THE SENSE OF CUTTING DOWN WITHOUT SUPPLYING ANY COUNTERBALANCE, WHICH WOULD BE MOST IMPOLITIC,—BUT ON AN INTELLIGENT SYSTEM, CONCEIVED IN THE TRUE SPIRIT OF THE SOUND MILITARY PRINCIPLE, THAT INCREASED SPEED OF MOVEMENT COMPENSATES FOR DECREASED NUMBERS,—WOULD GIVE US AT LEAST 15,000 IF NOT 20,000 MORE MEN FOR THIS **Reduction of our force in India**

HOME RESERVE BEFORE THE END OF 1868. And the economy attendant on this concentration (not reduction) of our strength, *would enable a splendid Reserve of* 30,000 *to* 35,000 *men to be fully organised and effective amongst us, in twenty-two months from this day, without one shilling of additional charge on the Home Estimates.* And this principle for the creation of a Reserve once established, would be capable of such ready expansion as to give us in eight or ten years some 50,000 to 60,000 tried, trained men—and hereafter 100,000 or more in the same manner; these men to be—not withdrawn ordinarily, from industry and peace,—but ready to range themselves under the colours at forty-eight hours' notice—side by side with the 60,000 Regulars whom in addition to the necessary force for garrisons we always keep at home, to furnish in their turn the periodic relief of our Indian and colonially employed armies.

would give us a splendid Reserve in twenty-two months hence;

and hereafter 100,000 Reserve men.

Once on a recognised footing, forming part of our systematic national defence—and thus granted the encouragement and consideration it deserved, each succeeding year would see this Reserve for our Regular Army augmented by from 3,000 to 5,000 excellent seasoned soldiers, still in the very prime of life, who would pass out from the Line as their limited ten years' service expired.

The Regular Army would henceforth feed this Reserve with some 5,000 men annually.

We have pointed out that the model of the Prussian system should be the basis of the principle of our own Reserve. But to make the resemblance complete, there is one more arrangement which lies at the root of any system of Reserve, which must be eventually carried out if we would desire to have an effective force of trained soldiers—of any respectable number—in a short time.

THAT IS THE SHORTENING OF THE TERM OF SERVICE IN THE REGULAR ARMY.

This shortened service need not become a permanent thing with us. The necessities of our system of reliefs

to our troops serving for so many years abroad require that the term of service should be about ten or twelve years.

The Royal Commission on Recruiting has just fixed the first term at twelve years.

BUT SINCE THE FORMATION OF A RESERVE IS UNDOUBTEDLY OUR GREATEST MILITARY NEED, IT IS WORTH WHILE TO MAKE A TEMPORARY SACRIFICE TO ACCOMPLISH THIS OBJECT IN THE SHORTEST POSSIBLE TIME.

A temporary modification of our present system—*by the reduction for the next five years only*— of the term of service of all men enlisted hereafter, would give us a result precisely analogous to that which has given Prussia her vast and effective reserves.

And this shortening of the term of service—which at first sight appears a wanton expense, would eventually and speedily—as we shall show hereafter—prove to be an economy in the soundest and widest sense of the word.

The details of the plan of which we speak would be as follows: Henceforth let it be at the option of every recruit presenting himself for enlistment, either to engage himself, as at present, for ten years' service in infantry, and twelve years' in cavalry, *or*, *give him the alternative*, *if he prefers*, *of engaging for only seven years*, *on the condition that he binds himself at the same time to serve seven years in the Home Reserve*, AT THE EXPIRATION OF THE FIRST SEVEN *of general*, *it may be entirely foreign*, *service*. *For India*, *when the recruit engages for a regiment which has full that time to serve there*,* *we would suggest that the term of enlistment be lowered to only* FIVE *years*, *with*, *of course*, *the condition of nine years' subsequent service in the Reserve*.

The establishment of a system of shorter service of this sort, temporarily and for a temporary object, would,

* Which can of course be known at once by the roster of relief for foreign service.

it is confidently anticipated, have three most beneficial results.

Benefits of shortening the term of service.

First.—It would draw a much better class of men into the service. Many a well-conditioned lad, who will not now look at the recruiting-sergeant's shilling because he is forced to bind himself for ten or twelve years, would be glad, from the mere love of change, to go for five or seven (according as he selected a solely Indian or general service regiment), and would have no objection to the additional bond for seven or nine years in the Reserve, that ensured his being brought home at the end of a short foreign service, to spend the rest of the time at home in an almost nominal military service that would not debar him from more profitable employment amongst his friends, and only liable to be broken in upon in time of war.*

Second.—It would make Indian service popular by making the term there two years less than elsewhere abroad, and would thus always ensure a full supply of recruits for the regiments there, where of all our possessions the annual drain and demand is the greatest.

Third.—By giving a great impetus to recruiting it would enable us to draw sufficient men from various portions of our service (for whom it would find *immediate* substitutes in recruits)—to enable us speedily to raise the Reserve to respectable numbers—and thus early to obviate our present danger.

Fourth.—Moreover as the system of reliefs to our regiments abroad is based on the calculation of twelve years' service in India and the colonies and five to six years at home,—in other words, as one regiment is kept at home for every two abroad and so also with individual men,—a reduction of 20,000 men in India would allow a corresponding reduction of 10,000 men at home. These discharged from the Regular Army and turned over to

* See hereafter, p. 21.

the Reserve *would be equally available for service at about one-third of their present annual cost.*

Recapitulation of the heads of this plan.

The several heads of our plan, therefore, provide for the formation of a Reserve for our Foreign Service Army in four distinct batches: the First to be formed by the re-engagement of discharged 'ten years' men.'—To yield say 12,000 to 15,000 in the next six months.

Second.—15,000 to 20,000 more men to be gradually withdrawn from India in the next twenty-two months. The first and second sources together thus giving us over 30,000 men before the end of 1868.

Third.—The gradual augmentation of the Reserve, annually, for the next five years by 3,000 to 5,000 men of the 'ten-years men' whose time has *not* yet expired, to be re-attracted as they leave the army by inducements set forth further on.

Fourth.—After five years from the present time (supposing the temporary limitation of service to five and seven years that we have suggested to be brought into force *at once,*)—*all* the men henceforth enlisted with a condition of seven and nine years' further service in the Reserve would become successively available; probably at the rate of 8,000 to 10,000 a year. This steady supply would place us, ten years hence, in as strong a position as Prussia holds at this moment.

The suggestion of an increase to the Militia considered.

The question of a large system of ready increase for the Militia—that is, of having existing in each county the framework and staff of just double the number of Militia regiments now established there, these cadres to be filled up by a general ballot in time of war, which has lately been put forward and warmly advocated in some of the papers—is beside the object of these notes, WHICH CONFINE THEMSELVES SOLELY TO THE METHOD FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A READY RESERVE FOR OUR REGULAR ARMY. That question, of a method for rapidly expanding the Militia, is worthy of every consideration, but cannot be entered upon

here. The ballot for enforced service is certainly an existent part of our constitutional law; but, like many other enactments which the advance of time has made unsuited or brought into opposition to the spirit of the age, its effectual enforcement is at least questionable unless it were simultaneous in operation with a farther enactment making military service in the Volunteers compulsory on every Englishman, irrespective of rank or position, who would desire to exempt himself from service in the Militia by ballot.

Ballot can scarcely be enforced unless compulsory military service is made universal.

At all events, for any Reserve to our Regular and Foreign Service Army—whether it be put into the shape of a plan such as we are now advocating, and thus become a resource we can count upon with certainty as to effect, and punctuality as to time, or whether it be left, as it is most desirable in the national interests that it should *not* be left to remain, as at present, a conjectural supply to be obtained by drafts from the Militia under the payment of fabulous war bounties, such supply obtainable only slowly and uncertainly as to time—one thing appears pretty certain, that the men will have to be drawn from that class whose labour is to be purchased in the general labour market for from one shilling to half-a-crown a day, and for which the State must be content, as heretofore, to bid competitively with private employers of labour. The Reserve for Foreign Service can never be drawn from the comparatively wealthy class who form the mass of the Volunteers.

The Reserve for our Foreign Service Army must be drawn from the labouring class.

The scheme which we propose, and of which we are now about to enter on some details of organisation, is certainly the most economical method by which this can be done. It has, moreover, the advantage—almost inestimable in time of war—of giving *us the certainty of being able to dispose of a certain number of thousands of men, for a given purpose, at a given place and day.* By the old method of drafts from the Militia it may happen again,

The scheme proposed is the most economical way practicable.

as it did in the Crimea, that the slow and uncertain supply of driblets of half-trained or wholly untrained men obtained scarcely suffices to fill up from week to week the casualties caused by death and disease in the ranks of our regiments in the field. It was not till the spring of 1856 that the ranks of our regiments, decimated at Alma and Inkerman in the end of 1854, regained their full numbers, and then the new comers were not to be compared in efficiency to the splendid soldiers they so tardily replaced. This Reserve plan would entirely prevent the recurrence of similar failure and national disappointment. Eight or ten years hence we should have *two* armies, each of some 60,000 tried soldiers, available at forty-eight hours' notice: the first half serving actually with their regiments and instantly ready for any demand; the second half, of equally high military quality, living at their homes, aiding the industrial resources of the country, *costing altogether considerably less than a million a year*—but ready in forty-eight hours to supplement or to replace the first.

The present system of Re-serves broke down in the Crimea.

Strength that this plan would give us hereafter.

With regard now to the details for creating the proposed Reserve, taking each of our sources of supply of men in succession, in the order laid down at page 13.

Details for forming the Reserve.

We would enquire, What has become of all the men who have been discharged from the army under the 'ten years' service' Act since 1857? As this Act passed in 1847, and men enlisted under it began to take their discharge in 1857, it is fair to suppose that, exclusive of those who have re-engaged, at least 3,000 men a year, or 27,000 men in all, have thus passed out of military service in the years between 1857 and 1866. If we take into consideration, moreover, the 10,000, or more, who were discharged *en masse* at the transfer of the local Indian European army from the Company to the Crown in 1859, we shall find that, irrespective of the number of these men who subsequently re-enlisted, there must be from this source of discharged men alone some 35,000 to 40,000 men

The discharged ten years' men.

somewhere who have served ten and twelve years, and the oldest of whom is still effective for seven years' more active service.

Supposing a full third of these 40,000 men to have emigrated, died, or to be so employed as to be unavailable for the proposed Reserve, it follows that there must still be in these islands some 25,000 men or more ready and available for such service. And if we can but make the Reserve acceptable to even 12,000 of them (which is probably a very low estimate), we shall gain the whole number we have calculated on as obtainable from this source.

The existing Army of Reserve.

It will be probably new to the general public, or even to readers moderately well skilled in the military topics of the day, to hear that there *is* such a body in existence in these islands as an 'Army of Reserve.' This is nevertheless the case. Such an organisation was projected in 1859; was embodied by the Act of Parliament 22 and 23 Vict. c. 42. Its regulations are contained in two War Office Circulars—No. 514, dated 9th, and No. 523, dated 29th December 1859. But so little is the scheme generally known, and so weak have the inducements offered hitherto proved, that up to April 1862 this so-called *Army* mustered but 840 men, in the whole United Kingdom; and by a return dated 1st April 1865, it could still only show 2,081 men! But even this small gradual increase, instead of being discouraging, is sufficient to show, when we consider the want of vigour used in pressing it upon soldiers generally, the small inducement given, and the general undemonstrativeness and *invisibility* of the whole scheme, that under better and more attractive management we might easily and speedily raise several thousand men from this source.*

Projected in 1859.

Numbers amount to nothing.

* The Royal Commission on the Recruiting of the Army, which has recently concluded its sittings, alludes in its Report to the failure of the Reserve scheme of 1859, and, content with pointing out the failure, does not discuss the matter further, or suggest a remedy. But, surely, if it be once

The writer has spoken on the subject of re-engagement to many discharged soldiers. Most of them had never even heard of the Army of Reserve. Soldiers have not generally either the opportunity or the taste for studying War Office Circulars that are buried in the orderly-rooms of their regiments. Nearly all agreed in saying that, under increased inducement, there would be no lack of men to re-engage; they themselves, the speakers, amongst the first.

Discharged soldiers generally would gladly enter the Reserve.

But to make the Reserve Service sufficiently attractive to draw back these men in any considerable numbers, the following are some additions to the existing regulations that would probably be wanted.

Considerable additional inducements required.

1. Give every man who has served his ten or twelve years a small bounty on re-engaging for the Reserve: say £1. BUT AS ONE MAIN FEATURE OF THE SCHEME IS TO HAVE MEN AVAILABLE FOR FOREIGN SERVICE ON EMERGENCY, THEY SHOULD BE ENGAGED TO SERVE ABROAD IN TIME OF WAR,—BUT ONLY FOR THE DURATION OF THE CAMPAIGN, RETURNING TO THEIR HOMES AND ORDINARY PURSUITS AFTER THE PRESSURE THAT CALLED THEM OUT HAD FAIRLY PASSED.

Reserve men should be liable to foreign service in war time.

The men of the present Reserve—the 2,081 above spoken of—are only engaged to serve *at home.* It is not anticipated that this liability to foreign service, *if strictly limited to the duration of the war* (this of course means to a definite time after it), would prove any bar to re-en-

admitted that a Reserve is desirable (and this is to be gathered by inference from several passages of the Report), the proper course to pursue is, not at the first failure to abandon in despair a principle which is admitted to be sound, and which if its details were in working order would rescue us from all our difficulties, but to closely examine the *causes of failure,* and thus arrive at the means of ensuring its success for the future. Between the two plans, one for a Reserve that should give us at once 100,000 trained soldiers, the other that by improving the Militia should give us 100,000 to 150,000 additional, but only partially trained, militiamen for national defence, no one that considers the double power *both at home and abroad* that the Reserve would give us, can hesitate for a moment.

gagements. The fact rather is, on the contrary, that in time of war every Englishman who has worn the uniform—unless domestic matters have since prospered with him to a degree quite exceptional with discharged soldiers—is discontented for the time with the trammels and the *ennui* of peaceful pursuits, and is fretting to be back doing his share in the ranks of his former comrades.

Time passed under arms in time of war to count for double for pension.

2. Let the time for pension (for all Reserve men are, even under the existing rules, entitled to pension after twenty-one years of service in the aggregate, performed part in the Line and the rest in the Reserve,) be calculated on the principle that every year or fraction of a year that a man called from his home in time of war serves under arms shall count as *two* years or their corresponding fraction, for time for pension.

Reserve men to be enlisted for twenty-one years where possible.

3. But let all men who are willing to enter for that length of time be enlisted for such time in the Reserve *as will complete their whole military service to twenty-one years.*

Probably, even with the men who should henceforth be enlisted under the proposal at page 14, for the shortened time of five or seven years, with the remainder of fourteen years to be made up in the Reserve, when that time was expired the country would have no difficulty in inducing them to prolong their Reserve service, without additional bounty, for the remainder of twenty-one years, or even as long as the State would retain them. Being comfortably settled at their homes, the time would be more likely to be limited by the cessation of their bodily efficiency than by any desire on their part to cease to draw their retaining fee.

Pay when under arms, and retaining fee when at home.

4. Raise the retaining fee, or annual payment, to a Reserve man while residing at his home, from £4, its present rate, to £6 for a private soldier, and a proportionately larger sum for good noncommissioned officers. The men of the Naval Reserve receive £6 a year; and a trained

soldier in the prime of life, and selected for efficiency, under our present circumstances and needs, is as well worth retaining for the next few years, till we have a settled Reserve system at all events, as a trained sailor. The rate of pay when embodied—that is, called out under arms—to remain as at present, the same as for the Line.

Indian service to be made a stepping-stone to admission to the Reserve, whenever there is a scarcity of men for India.

5. To ensure a constant succession of men for India, for which fresh men are always wanted, and subsequently to help in getting the Reserve to a respectable strength as early as possible, let it be open to every soldier serving at home, and whose regiment has the full five years of home service before it, to have the option—only to be open to the army temporarily, at and during the times when there is a dearth of men for India —of volunteering for India, on the condition that after five years of effective service there he shall be entitled to be brought home and passed into the Reserve, on condition of binding himself to continue in it for the remainder of twenty-one years.

Many a soldier originally enlisted for ten or twelve years, and still bound for a part of that time, would gladly shorten his whole period of active service by three, two, or even by *one* year, by embracing this option of serving in India. This would ensure our regiments in India being always kept at full strength, and it would be judicious by thus offering this inducement of a slightly shortened Line service—five years complete of it being performed in India—to make such shortened service a stepping-stone to the Reserve.

6. With regard to the retaining fee, or annual payment to soldiers entering the Reserve. This was fixed in 1859 at £4 a year to each private soldier. We have already recommended that it should be raised to £6*

* Six pounds a year, or about fourpence a day, may seem, at first sight, a large sum to pay annually to a soldier of the Reserve. But when it is considered that any man engaged in a permanent employ would be liable to be

(the same as the Naval Reserve) for every man who, having *completed* his bond to the State of serving the full ten or twelve years for which he originally enlisted, can be induced to *re-engage* for the remainder of twenty-one years in the Reserve. But for soldiers brought to the Reserve from India, as proposed in Section 5, gaining, by being so brought, a shortening by two or three years of their original contract term of Line service, we think it would be equitable that the retaining fee for the first years of their Reserve service should be kept at only £4—to be, after the years required to complete their original contract, raised to £6. The reason for this difference is obvious. In the case of the soldier already discharged, we seek to attract *back* to military service a man upon whom the State has no further claim; in the case of the soldier whom we release from part of his original contract, in our desire to bring the Reserve speedily up to a respectable figure—it is but just that he should not be, *at first*, on the same footing of pecuniary advantage as the man who has re-engaged voluntarily, and to whom the remuneration offered should be therefore proportionately higher. When the transferred man from the Line had served out the remaining years—one, two, or three, as the case might be—of his original contract, he would receive the full rate, £6, of Reserve pay.

Men gaining a shortening of their foreign service by passing to the Reserve to receive only £4 instead of £6 annually till their original-contract term is completed.

Organisation of the Reserve into tactical units.

Now, as to the organisation of the Reserve. Probably no better plan could be found than to let it increase the efficiency of our great constitutional reserve, the Militia, and form, as it were, a connecting link between it and the Line, by a system that shall incorporate the Reserve with the Militia in time of peace, *but without letting the men be*

dismissed from it unless he could provide a substitute to do his work during his annual fourteen days' training—and that he could not well procure a substitute under the sum of thirty shillings for those fourteen days—the remaining payment accruing to him for a year's service in the Reserve will not appear excessive.

absorbed as individuals into the body of the Militia inseparably.

This could be effected as follows:

There are 115 regiments of infantry, and 31 of artillery Militia in Great Britain and Ireland.

As the men for the formation of the Reserve became available from the two sources of supply mentioned above (see p. 13), viz., the re-engagement of discharged men at home, and the Indian reduction, let each man return to his home, or place of future selected residence—the greatest possible latitude in choice being given in this respect. Each man's chosen place of residence would be registered; a central place in his district for periodical muster and payment, once a quarter, assigned to him. Then consider the men as localised by *their counties.*

Their number would probably be pretty equally distributed over the surface of the three kingdoms. Let there be formed then in each county one, two, or more *companies* of Reserve men; each company with its officers appointed from the Line. Let the Reserve companies of each county in which they did not amount to a battalion be permanently attached to, and considered a part of, the Militia regiment of that county. In case the companies were sufficiently numerous, over four, let them constitute a separate battalion of Reserve. Or the companies of Reserve of two or more adjoining counties could be aggregated into an administrative battalion of Reserve. Whether the plan of keeping the Reserve in battalions separate from the Militia, but still bound to them by belonging to the same county, or the plan that should identify them more with the Militia, and thus give each Militia Regiment the solidity arising from having a component but entirely separate part, consisting of tried old soldiers, would be the best, is a matter for future consideration and experiment. If it were decided to attach the companies to the Militia regiment of each county, their

Their organisation into companies would make the Reserve an element of increased strength and solidity to the Militia, and yet keep them instantly available to reinforce our Army on Foreign service in the field.

presence, as a matter of example and emulation to the purely Militia companies, would be assuredly beneficial, *provided that the Reserve companies*, while under the same *battalion* commander as the Militia, *were kept for discipline, each company solely under its own specially selected officer drawn from the Line.* THUS, BY REFRAINING FROM DISPERSING THE MEN, *AS INDIVIDUALS*, THROUGH THE MILITIA REGIMENTS, THE ORIGINAL OBJECT OF THEIR BEING FORMED INTO A RESERVE WOULD BE CARRIED OUT; VIZ. THAT THESE RESERVE COMPANIES, EACH RETAINING ITS FULL TACTICAL UNITY, COULD, AT TWENTY-FOUR HOURS' NOTICE, BE ASSEMBLED AND TAKE THEIR PLACE WITH THE LINE; EITHER AS BATTALIONS, BRIGADED WITH THE LINE BATTALIONS TO MEET INVASION, OR AS COMPANIES DRAFTED OFF AT ONCE IN TIME OF FOREIGN WAR, TO FILL UP THE VACANCIES MADE BY CASUALTIES IN THE LINE REGIMENTS OF THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTIES SERVING ABROAD IN THE FIELD. In case it were thought better that the Reserve companies should give increased solidity and morale in time of peace to the Militia, by attaching them to the county Militia regiment, it would be well that they should be called out for the annual training at the same time and place with the county regiment. With this exception, that the Reserve companies should not be called out until the first fortnight of the twenty-eight days of the Militia training was over. Then the old soldiers, of course wanting infinitely less drill, would, for the last fourteen days of training, work together with the Militia regiment, in battalion with it, *but still retaining their distinct companies.*

Annual training of the Reserve to take place at the same time as the latter portion of that of the Militia.

7. The Reserve men would thus be withdrawn from their homes and occupations for only fourteen days in the year; except such men of them as, being duly qualified as drill instructors, might be assembled advantageously on the first day of the annual training of the regiment to help to drill the recruits of their county Militia.

8. A separate system of periodical inspection of the

Reserve companies and battalions, made by competent officers at the end of their fourteen days' annual assembly, would require to be established.

Hitherto we have said nothing beyond hinting at the mere principle, viz. the substitution of organised speed for inert numbers, as to the measure by which it is proposed to carry out the great reduction of withdrawing 15,000 to 20,000 men from India, *without in the slightest degree decreasing the military and political strength of our army there, or the firmness of our hold on the country.* This would be fully accomplished, and more than accomplished, by substituting for, from 15,000 to 20,000 of our slow-moving line infantry to be withdrawn thence, *a body of* 7,890 *Mounted Riflemen, armed with the best breechloaders, organised in fifteen battalions of* 526 *men and* 450 *troop-horses to each battalion; these* 7,890 *to form a part of the remaining infantry.* **Details of the proposed reduction of our permanent British garrison of India, by substituting a systematic organised speed for mere inert numbers.** **Establishment of the system of Mounted Rifles for India.**

By 'Mounted Riflemen' it must be explained that we mean troops somewhat different from the, in most respects, excellent model we have long possessed at the Cape of Good Hope, and assimilated more to the type of tactical completeness and efficiency which four years of incessant and instructive war have lately developed in the American (so called) cavalry of 1865. Troops, that is, who unite to all the tactical speed for manœuvre, and for long-continued marches of the best cavalry, the training for fighting on foot, and the destructive breech-loading rifle fire, of the best light infantry. The formation of such a body, though only 7,890 in number, previously to the withdrawal of 15,000 or even 20,000 of our splendid but inert slow-moving line infantry, would, *it is confidently anticipated, not only not weaken our hold on India, but would, as we shall proceed to demonstrate in succeeding chapters, make our grasp of our Indian empire more firm, tenacious, and widely felt and acknowledged, than it has been at any previous period of history.* **Would considerably strengthen, not weaken, our hold on India.**

The creation of this new arm, on this scale, would allow us to bring away in gradual batches, so that their absence would not be felt by the sensitive people amongst whom the great tactical change and improvement would be wrought, some 15,000 to 20,000 men of our line infantry; partly by regiments withdrawn without relief, except in the substitution of a battalion of mounted riflemen *of half its strength for each regiment so withdrawn*, partly by individuals, who would be brought home and fused into the Reserve, and form the second batch of 15,000 to 20,000 Reserve men whom we have counted upon at page 17, as available before the end of 1868, to strengthen this great National Defence System.

To return for a moment to the modification suggested in future recruiting for the Army (page 14).

The great collateral advantages of shortening the term of active service:

The limitation, even though only in force for the next five years, of the time of service of men enlisted in future to five years for India and seven years for the colonies and home, accompanied of course in each case with a further liability to seven, nine, or the remainder of twenty-one years' service in the Reserve, would, it is believed, be by means of its advantages as to home service, retaining fee, and pension, one grand step in the direction of attracting a better class of young men to our military service; and thus finally enabling us, by making the Army a popular employment, from which it would be a pecuniary loss prospectively as well as a disgrace to be dismissed for misconduct—to do away with the punishment of flogging, which doubtless is one main bar in the popular mind to the enlistment of a better class.

Will allow the gradual abolition of corporal punishment.

We should then be able to reserve that punishment for cases in which it would be the appropriate means of proclaiming that a man had proved himself unworthy ever again to wear the uniform, or carry arms beside honourable soldiers. If a man proved an incorrigible scamp, instead of allowing him to be an expense from year to year in the military prisons and their

Will enable us to discharge all worthless soldiers.

establishments kept up like hotels for his accommodation, and a festering sore of bad example in his regiment, we would flog him and turn him out to undergo imprisonment in civil gaol or transportation. But no man whom the lash had once touched should thenceforth be permitted to serve the Queen as a soldier.

Even the retention of corporal punishment on field service, always hitherto maintained by the most humane officers to be absolutely necessary when you are in the dilemma of wanting to punish severely for grave breaches of discipline without withdrawing a man for any length of time from the ranks, might be ultimately abolished when the general introduction of a higher class of men, and the merciless ejection of scamps whom we are now *obliged* to retain because we cannot replace them, had raised the moral tone of the private soldier throughout the service; and thus caused the discipline of the Army in time of war to rest, not upon the poor basis of the fear of degrading punishment, but on the more stable foundation of the honour and patriotism of free Englishmen voluntarily serving their country in the field.

We English, of all people, cannot afford to pay for indifferent soldiers.

One thing recent military events abroad ought plainly to teach us, that for us English, of all nations, considering the limited number of men we can at our best command, a soldier of low *morale*, defective intelligence, and physical power broken down by vice and drink, is the most ruinously expensive luxury in which we can indulge.

Summing up of the advantages of this scheme.

To sum up the advantages of the Reserve plan here advocated:

First.—Within twenty-two months from this date it would give us the power to put 100,000 trained soldiers, exclusive of garrisons, into our First line of Home Defence, at twenty-four hours' notice.

Second.—It would set on foot a system which in six or eight years would give us 60,000, and in a few years more 100,000 trained Reserve soldiers, constantly

resident in the country; maintained at almost nominal cost, *and adding to, not withdrawn from, our national industrial resources in commerce, agriculture, and manufacture.*

Third.—It would gradually raise the tone of the private soldier throughout the Army, and make dismissal from the service a pecuniary loss, and thus a punishment to be feared instead of a desired end to be gained.

Fourth.—IT WOULD DO ALL THIS WITHOUT ONE SHILLING OF ADDITIONAL CHARGE IN THE HOME ESTIMATES—as the cost would be paid by India. *And this expenditure would be moreover an immense gain to India*—being the cause of, and accompanied by, an annual surplus of one and a half million in her budget, to be employed in increased works of public advantage.

Fifth.—By removing us, immediately and for ever, beyond the fear of invasion, it would give time for the deliberate, leisurely, and careful elaboration of the one scheme to be chosen hereafter out of the many now proposed, by which the Militia may be made capable of—

1st. Constantly feeding the Line.

2nd. A ready expansion, or even doubling, in time of need.

Principle on which this charge should equitably be laid on the Revenue of India explained.

The principle on which we propose to lay upon India the charge of a scheme which is mainly for the benefit of England, naturally requires some explanation. It is, however, one already fully recognised in our financial dealings with that country, and is made equitable by the fact that the interests of the two countries are indissolubly identical.

At present the depôts of regiments serving in India remain at home. These depôts aggregated into Depôt Battalions are a large and recognised part of the force immediately available for Home Defence. *Yet India pays every shilling of the expenses of these depôts.* On

the same principle, as one main reason for the formation and maintenance of a Reserve at home would be the contingency of our possibly having to send, at some future time, reinforcements of 30,000 or 40,000 men to India,* it is equitable that she should bear the charge of the maintenance of that number of soldiers in England. Their maintenance at home, in the Reserve, would not cost one-third, probably not one-fourth, of what it does in India; and when the new system of steam transports *viâ* the Red Sea is completed, they would, though ordinarily living at their homes throughout the United Kingdom, be equally available for India's need in six weeks from the time that that need was foreseen and apparent, as if they were ordinarily kept continuously, with daily diminishing numbers—and diminishing physical efficiency of the whole body, as well as of each individual,—grilling on the burning plains of Hindostan.

As we shall show further on, the proper place for a Reserve kept up to meet India's necessities in time of war, to be ordinarily quartered, *is not in India, but at home*. (See Chapter IV.)

The reduction would cause an annual saving of two and a half millions in India.

Moreover, as by the Estimates of 1865 the maintenance of 68,300 men (exclusive of officers) in India costs £15,774,456, a reduction of even 18,000 men in her permanent British garrisons would allow, at least, £2,500,000, now devoted in her budget to military purposes, to be made otherwise available.

One million (we take an extreme figure to be on the safe side, for the actual cost even of 100,000 Reserve men would not amount to one million) might be credited

* This does not allude to the contingency of another revolt in India—the establishment of Mounted Riflemen in sufficient numbers would secure us at once and for ever against that—but to the possibility, at present remote, vague, and in the far distance, but which events may some day bring near, of our having to contend on Indian soil for the possession of India, with the armies of a rival European power.

annually to England in furtherance of the cost of the Reserve scheme. This would still leave India a gainer by an annual surplus of from one and a half to two millions, which, applied to additional works of public advantage — irrigation, communication, and education — would open up for her people an era of prosperity and wellbeing such as they have never known before.

This alteration would give us a vastly stronger hold upon India.

Thus every individual of the teeming millions of India would be in some degree a gainer by a scheme which would likewise give England a military position, stable, unassailable, respected, such as she has not enjoyed of late years. The demonstration that this seeming reduction of strength in India would be *not a reduction*, but, as regards England, a concentration—as regards India, a vast and universally recognised *increase* of our power and hold upon her—we propose to defer to succeeding chapters.

CHAPTER II.

THE ACTUAL CONDITION OF CAVALRY, AND ITS FUTURE SHARE IN WAR, CONSIDERED IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT MILITARY EVENTS.

LOOKING round our military service for the means of carrying out the great reform our first chapter has just touched upon, by the formation of a great Home Reserve to our Foreign Service Army, our search is naturally directed to detect the weak or *comparatively* inefficient parts of our system; for by strengthening and improving these can we alone hope for such a concentration of our power as shall give us the means, without greatly increased expense, of a rapid expansion when necessary, in directions where expansion is proved to be desirable.

In search thus of blots or blemishes, not in any spirit of captious cavilling, but with an honest desire for public good, let us briefly examine the three Arms of our service, by the light of the recent events in America and in Germany.

We find, then, that our Artillery leaves little to be desired. Leaving aside the question of whether they have the right description of field gun, as one too purely scientific and personal to the arm for discussion here, we are glad to see that they stand the test of comparison with their foreign neighbours who have more recently passed through the crucible of actual war, in a manner to make us nationally proud of their efficiency.

Our Infantry is almost perfect. Breechloaders and an improved system of field movements more in accordance with their requirements—especially a quicker action as light infantry, to which the now widespread gymnastic

instruction, and particularly the new 'Running Drill,' are the fitting prelude—will soon do what little is required. There is no fear but that, as in the centuries past so in the future, the sturdy British infantry will worthily prove the mainstay and never-failing support of England's power and honour in the field.

But when we come to the Cavalry, we find not only a theory of action, and consequently of instruction, apparently behind and at variance with the spirit of the times, but symptoms, only too evident, of an intention to shut the eyes to the manifest direction in which all progress in military practice and art is tending; and a determination, which recent events appear to pronounce to be mistaken, to adhere to a tactical system that originated in a state of things which has long passed away, once and for ever.

We would guard ourselves carefully from any chance of misapprehension. We desire to speak with all respect and admiration of the *personnel* of our cavalry. Its regimental efficiency is all that zealous and intelligent officers, splendid and high-spirited men, and fine horses can succeed in making it, under the system which antiquated and thoroughly obsolete ideas still retain amongst us. But whereas all the rest of the world is watching with an ever increasing interest the progress of long range and precision in rifled arms great and small, and is eagerly endeavouring to introduce into its cavalry such modifications as this totally changed state of things necessitates, *we* have just succeeded in knocking on the head and virtually abolishing for all good effect the small modicum of rifle instruction which had with infinite labour and fight against prejudice been introduced into our partially rifle-armed cavalry; are deliberately putting the hands of progress back on the face of the clock; and all the more obstinately, from an inward and not entirely repressible sense of being wrong, proclaiming aloud that we pin our faith on spurs, lance and sabre, and that these, as in the com-

pletely changed and never to be repeated times of yore, will still carry all before them. And this error has found more supporters from a superficial and one-sided review of the purely Cavalry actions in the late Bohemian campaign, when a more calm, unbiassed, and critical examination of the hard unalterable *facts* of the general influence of cavalry on the whole campaign—very ugly facts some of them—that underlie the mere outward appearing that has given ground to such hasty assumption, would show, unmistakably, that even more strongly than in America, LONG RANGE AND INCREASED PRECISION, AND NOTABLY AND ESPECIALLY THE RAPID FIRE OF BREECHLOADERS, HAVE, ONCE AND FOR EVER, SET ASIDE THE SWAY THAT LANCE AND SABRE FORMERLY HELD UNDISPUTED OVER THE FIELDS OF WAR.

This question is a much graver and infinitely *larger* one than at first sight it appears. Not a mere fanciful one—to be placed in the same category with discussions about the cut of a pair of overalls, the lace on a forage cap, or the fit of a strap and buckle—but one which, starting from the comparatively small beginnings of sound tactical principles, widens out in its application (to us English especially, who have India to keep safe—economically if possible, but in any case safely,) till its spreading branches, taking in nearly every part of our system of national and colonial defence, become large considerations of strategy, and through strategy not only of military, but of civil and administrative policy and statecraft. It seems a wide step from the almost 'ridiculous' of the question of firearm or no-firearm for cavalry to the 'sublime' of increased prosperity and wellbeing to the millions of India, and strengthened security and economy in home defence to England; but these matters, so apparently irrelevant to each other, *are* inseparably connected. And we hope, by the time our reader has followed us through the several stages and chapters of our argument—if we may count

upon his patience so long—to show that this connection is neither imaginary nor farfetched, but as much a matter of actual everyday fact, and of not only practicable but of easy realisation as those daydreams which, conceived long ago in one mind, and since pitilessly carried out, have led Prussia, from the small beginning of the early and far-seeing adoption of breech-loaders *versus* muzzle-loaders, through all the detailed stages of building up and perfecting a military system organised to secure and develope this increased fire, to the triumphant issue of acknowledged possession of the first place in Northern Germany.

Briefly to forecast the heads of the long argument—which cannot, with any regard to complete explanation, be compressed into less than the two succeeding chapters—we would here say that

First.—An enlightened application and development of the tactical powers of the speed of the horse for manœuvre, and his strength for continued march, in combination with the tremendous destructive power of the best breech-loaders;

Second.—Will enable us, in certain portions of our military defence system, notably in India, TO SUBSTITUTE SMALLER RAPIDLY MOVEABLE NUMBERS FOR LARGE INERT MASSES. To specify, say 53,000 British soldiers, 7,890 of them MOUNTED RIFLEMEN and some 6,000 Rifle-armed Cavalry and Horse Artillery, the whole 14,000 mounted men able to move thirty miles a day for weeks together, in place of 73,000 men no portion of whom combining both fire and speed in one, can now move more quickly than twenty miles a day for four days together.*

* Our army in India would then stand thus:—

British Cavalry and Horse Artillery	6,000
Mounted Rifles, including officers	8,200
Field Batteries and Garrison Artillery	12,000
British Infantry	26,800
Total	53,000

Third.—And thus to effect a reduction, after the necessary first expense of setting on foot a new system had been paid, of some TWO-AND-A-HALF MILLIONS ANNUALLY in our Indian military expenditure. One million of which applied at home would give us a Reserve force of 35,000 men in twenty months, gradually increased to 60,000 in eight or ten years, and 100,000 hereafter, WITHOUT ONE SHILLING OF INCREASE TO THE HOME ESTIMATES; thus partially repaying the debt we incurred for India's preservation in 1859; and

Fourth.—The other million and a half applied in India to increased works of public utility would inaugurate for her people such an era of prosperity as they have never known, and thus go far to reconcile them to our rule.

Fifth.—AND THAT THIS CHANGE OF SYSTEM, SUBSTITUTING ORGANISED SPEED AND INCREASED RIFLE FIRE FOR INERT NUMBERS, WOULD GIVE US, WITH 53,000 BRITISH, SUCH A HOLD ON INDIA—LIGHT IN GRASP BUT DEFYING RELAXATION, STRONG AND FELT TO BE SO, YET NOT OPPRESSIVE—AS WE HAVE NEVER HAD IN THE DAYS OF OUR OCCUPATION OF IT WITH BETWEEN 70,000 AND 80,000 MEN, MOSTLY OF A SLOW-MOVING INFANTRY.

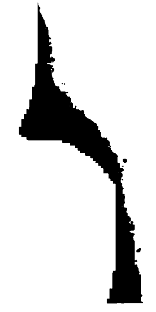
These objects, even if partially realisable (and the writer firmly believes he rather under-states than over-states the case), are somewhat more important and more likely to commend themselves to the national intellect and heart, than the object, much greater doubtless in some eyes, of our cavalry, the most costly portion of our military system—and one capable under more enlightened management of giving us these great results—being retained for ever as the useless expensive plaything for an-

or some 20,000 less than at present. But though the total *Infantry* would be some 20,000 less than at present, the total *men carrying rifles* would be about 39,800, or *only* 15,000 less than at present, the difference being made up by arming the Cavalry with rifles and creating Mounted Riflemen. The latter item, the creation of 7,890 *Mounted* Riflemen, may, in other words, be called *just trebling the power of that number of Infantry.*

tiquated tradition and unreasoning unobserving Routine to work its will upon.

All the so-called reforms recently carried out in our cavalry have had the object of assimilating its theory and practice more completely to that of the till recently famous Austrian Horse; that is, to commit it more completely than ever to entire reliance on lance, sabre, and speed in the charge. We have read how the Austrian cavalry—brave and forward even to a fault—fared under a very modified and partial application of breechloading fire. Is it not worth while to enquire whether recent experience ratifies and confirms the soundness of the principle, the example and precedent of which we have been so unhesitatingly following?

We have premised sufficiently to show that we are fully prepared to have the ideas these pages advocate strenuously resisted, nay, ridiculed and scouted by all but the more enlightened, reflecting, and observant of the cavalry officers of the old school. We now go on to details, appealing with confidence from prejudiced and therefore incompetent judges, to the calm critical verdict of the mass of thinking men, who are perfectly competent, with or without a previous training in the stables and ranks of our cavalry, to pronounce a sound opinion on a mere common-sense question, the merits of which lie within the reasoning scope of any common-sense man, when stripped of the silly attempts at mystification which a narrow professional exclusiveness would fain throw around them. On the other hand, we confidently invite all cavalry officers, lovers of their arm, who both have experience in the field and are prepared to shake themselves free from the trammels of professional prepossession and traditional ideas, to look at the question of the recent changes in firearms, especially the increased *rapidity in conjunction with precision* given by breechloaders, in its



bearing on the future use of cavalry, not as a matter of taste or liking, but with a calm unbiassed critical examination and weighing of established facts.

The theory of the representatives of what we may call the 'charging' school of cavalry is, that it spoils a dragoon to give him any fire-arm but a pistol for the *mêlée*, or a carbine to be used from the saddle in skirmishing; that the proper arms of a cavalry soldier are the lance or sabre; that these with his horse and his spurs are in effect the only legitimate weapons of his action; and that once he is permitted the idea of 'shooting' his *morale* is gone; that, in fact, 'the dragoon that hesitates is lost.'

Granted most fully that there was once every soundness in this line of reasoning.

In the days of Frederick the Great, throughout those of Napoleon, nay, later, till about 1854, when rifled arms began to be generally introduced, a ready forward boldness and dash were the safest as well as the most honourable course for a mounted soldier opposed to infantry. In the condition of infantry arms in those days, he had but at the worst to run the risk of two ill-directed shots, one delivered at 150, the second at or under 30 yards—from a weapon notorious for being quite uncertain beyond 120 yards, and not fully to be depended upon at 50. That is to say, his real danger in charging began at about 200 yards, and was over as soon as he had tempted his adversary on foot to fire his last shot at 30, 20, 10 or 5 yards; this taking place at a greater or less distance according to the coolness and steadiness of the footman.

After this, as the muzzle-loading musket could only be reloaded slowly, and the infantry soldier must stand perfectly defenceless while working and returning his ramrod, supposing the dragoon and his horse to have escaped unhit, the horseman had next to nothing to fear.

It was open to him to ride 'home' and close with the

footman; he had nothing but a bayonet-thrust to meet, and his sword or lance was supposed to be equal to ward that off. If he were well mounted, a good horseman, handy with his arms, and, above all, cool, determined, and *resolute to kill his man*, the chances from this moment were all in his favour. Very often, if rain or long-continued firing had damaged the old musket of the infantry, or if skirmishers on foot were overtaken individually when dispersed and breathless from sharp pursuit, the dragoon had but to ride in and cut his man down like a sheep, or run him through the back with his lance like a cockchafer. The clumsy, uncertain, smooth-bored 'Brown Bess' only admitted of being loaded, primed, and fired about twice in a minute, or, at the fastest, five shots in two minutes; and as the time occupied in traversing the 'dangerous ground,' the last 200 yards, at the gallop could not take more than thirty seconds, the risk to determined and well-mounted men was comparatively slight, unless the infantry they had to deal with were very steadfast and cool. Then indeed, even with those defective arms, whole pages of instances in history, too long to enumerate, attest that even in those days a good infantry could, under all but very exceptional circumstances, laugh at the efforts of the best and most devoted cavalry. Waterloo alone was enough to silence any doubt on that point for ever.

But in consequence of this inefficiency of infantry fire in those days, cavalry had—especially opposed to half-disciplined troops—a great *moral* effect. History abounds with instances in which we read of whole brigades of even the brave and impetuous French infantry casting away their arms, and even throwing themselves flat upon their faces, when flurried and stricken by the uncontrollable panic produced by the 'terrible whirlwind of a charge.' This was mainly, it is true, a *moral* effect—the

casualties actually inflicted by cavalry with sword or lance scarcely ever warranted this exaggerated fear; but men in a panic do not reason, and if the effects intended were produced, especially in the capture of large numbers of terrified prisoners, men did not care to enquire whether it was a moral or physical effect—the cavalry had answered its purpose, and was rightly extolled accordingly. Even when a retreating infantry made some sort of stand, and held somewhat together as they ran, the imperfect fire that was only really formidable to cavalry when delivered by two or three ranks steadily formed behind each other, became ridiculously weak when given by scattered isolated men, who were no longer individually backed by the confidence that men in close ranks have, 'If I miss my shot, the man on my right or left or behind me will do better and save me.' In such cases the task of a bold, well-instructed cavalry—that is, good horsemen and swordsmen, or lancers, individually, properly led and animated by a high spirit—was easy indeed.

But of the great chance that cavalry, even in those days ran, of failure when attacking infantry whose order had *not* been shaken—in other words, who retained a cool, steadfast front and a close formation, and whose fire, even of wretched smoothbores, was up to the average of steadiness and efficiency—let the following extracts speak eloquently. They are from a work on Cavalry, by a Prussian General, translated into English by Colonel L. N. Beamish, the historian of the King's German Legion of the Peninsular times, himself holding a high estimation of what cavalry, properly handled, could do. He says: 'Before making a charge of cavalry on infantry, it is always necessary to observe whether the appearances are favourable.' Again: 'Two grand principles for cavalry in all attacks on infantry are: first—suffer cannon-shot to

precede the charge; second—never attack infantry when it has taken up that favourable position which says resolutely, "Only come on."'

Further, 'When the moral element of infantry has not been weakened, a charge of cavalry in line will seldom succeed;' and, 'At Waterloo all efforts of the French cavalry were fruitless on this account.' *

Further, 'The time for cavalry to produce great effects is when the line of battle wavers, when the fire of artillery has weakened it, when single points have become

* An extract which Colonel Beamish gives in his work from the Journal of the late Major Macready, of the 30th Foot, containing the description of what occurred under his own eyes at Waterloo, is so graphic, and so thoroughly to the point which we are discussing, that we cannot do better than give it as it stands.

It is the testimony of an eye-witness, and one who united to extraordinary powers of observation a minuteness and vividness of detail, in recording facts, which makes his testimony of singular value. Major Macready says, speaking of the attacks on the infantry square in which he stood:—

'In a few minutes after, the enemy's cavalry galloped up and crowned the crest of our position. Our guns were abandoned, and they (the Cuirassiers) formed between the two brigades about two hundred paces in our front.

'Their first charge was magnificent. As soon as they quickened their trot into a gallop, the Cuirassiers bent their heads, so that the peaks of the helmets looked like vizors, and they seemed cased in armour from the plume to the saddle. Not a shot was fired till they were within thirty yards, when the word was given, and our men fired away at them. The effect was magical. Through the smoke we could see helmets falling, cavaliers starting from their seats with convulsive springs as they received our balls, horses plunging and rearing in the agonies of fright and pain, and crowds of the soldiery dismounted; part of the squadrons in retreat, but the more daring backing their horses to force them on the bayonets. Our fire soon disposed of these gentlemen.

'The main body reformed in our front, and rapidly and gallantly repeated their attacks; in fact from this time (about four o'clock) till near six, we had a constant repetition of these brave but unavailing charges. There was no difficulty in repulsing them, but our ammunition decreased alarmingly. At length an artillery waggon galloped up, emptied two or three casks of cartridges into the square, and we were all comfortable.

'The best cavalry is contemptible to a steady and well supplied infantry-regiment; even our men saw this, and began to pity the useless perseverance of their assailants, and as they advanced, would growl out, "Here come these fools again." Their devotion was invincible.'

thinned, when the infantry is tired and exhausted, and the arms, in consequence of a long-continued fire, no longer go off with regularity, and the fire becomes uncertain. This is the moment to attack infantry with advantage, and the cavalry must then suddenly advance and attack in masses. The hearing of the soldier is affected by the thunder of cannon and the long-continued fire of small arms, so that the word of command is heard and understood with difficulty. The smoke favours the unperceived advance of cavalry—all which are co-operating circumstances—wherefore at such a moment THE MERE APPEARANCE OF CAVALRY, WHEN UNEXPECTED, FREQUENTLY FRIGHTENS THE INFANTRY, AND MAKES THE VICTORY EASY.'

Again, he says: 'The 28th Regiment, at Alexandria, opened their ranks (should be *files*) at the approach of the French cavalry, let the squadrons pass, and, instantly closing them again, threw in so destructive a fire that nearly the whole perished on the spot.'

It was under the combined favourable circumstances of a most ineffective fire and a shaken *morale* of the infantry whom they attacked, that the triumphs of which we read as achieved by large bodies of horse were accomplished by Frederick's Hussars at Rosbach and Zorndorf; by the French Chasseurs against very ill-disciplined Spanish infantry at Rio Seco; by Le Marchant's British Cavalry divisions at Salamanca against the turned and broken French infantry.

It is to these traditions that those who exalt the old theory of cavalry action—the charging theory—still cling in our day, FORGETTING THE SOMEWHAT MATERIAL FACT THAT ALMOST EVERY INDIVIDUAL CIRCUMSTANCE OF THE MANY THAT WENT TO FORM THE FAVOURABLE COMBINATION UNDER WHICH THESE RESULTS WERE WON IS NOW CHANGED, AND HAS PASSED AWAY ONCE AND FOR EVER.

The first great blow given to the supremacy of what we may call a purely 'sabre cavalry' was when rifled arms became generally introduced. The 'dangerous ground' of the horseman was increased at once from 200 to 800 and even 1000 yards. Another most important element in the altered relative superiority of the two arms was the careful individual instruction of the infantry soldier which the use of rifled arms necessitated, and the consequent development of his intelligence and raising of his *morale* above the influence of panic excited by imaginary because unknown dangers. In learning to estimate by practice the power of his rifle at various ranges, and in hearing the frightful clang and crash of the bullets of a squad against iron targets at 500 yards and more, the confidence of the footman had been raised; he had come to understand, even in 1854, that the weapon in his hands enabled even one cool determined footman to ridicule and foil the best efforts of the bravest and most skilful dragoon; and that if he could not hit and bring down horse and rider in one of the no longer two but seven or eight shots he had time to deliver, while the 'dangerous ground' is being crossed, it must be his own fault.

The memorable instance will be recollected of the charge of the Russian cavalry towards the 93rd Highlanders, in October 1854, before Balaklava, when it is credibly stated that so formidable and deterrent was the fire of the Enfield rifle, that no horseman ever got nearer to the famed 'thin red line' than 200 yards.

Again, in 1859, in the Italian campaign, though the detailed accounts have never become generally known, following the usual French policy of concealment of failure, the three splendid beautifully-mounted regiments of Chasseurs d'Afrique, and the five regiments of Hussars of the Cavalry divisions of Generals Partouneaux and Desvaux, which at Solferino executed several most spirited

and determined charges against the Austrian squares, found the results by no means equal to their expectations or their losses.

Though the unwillingness and lukewarmness arising from fighting in an unpopular cause made the resistance of some of the squares, composed of Italian and Hungarian troops, anything but vigorous, and they showed a strong disposition to be easily captured, yet the tremendous losses which the French Cavalry sustained from contact with those squares that *did* stand, showed plainly that no amount of bravery and devotion could secure to Cavalry, even against *inferior* rifles, the great results that in the days of the musket were often easily attainable.

It was to this cause mainly, the heavy and stumming losses of the French Cavalry, that was chiefly attributable the almost unmolested retreat of the Austrians over the plains down to and across the Mincio.

Much stress has in consequence been laid, by the French accounts of the battle, on the storm which swept and darkened the field on the afternoon of that day; but if it had been so severe, it must have hindered and confused the *Austrian retreat also.*

The real fact is that the French Cavalry had been too severely handled, and were too much mauled to be good for effective pursuit. And their losses were sustained, be it remembered, almost entirely from Artillery and Infantry fire. Nor can their slackness and want of vigour in pursuit be attributed to any great covering or detaining action on the part of the Austrian horse; for it will be remembered that by a mistake of Count Lauingen a great part of the Austrian Cavalry had been led off to the rear early in the day, and took no subsequent part in the action.

Thus stood matters as relates to Cavalry *versus* Infantry

till 1861. Then the great American war came to open up an entirely new class of experiences.

In consequence of the defeat at Bull Run, and the apparent inefficiency of Cavalry against rifled arms, which early struck the practical American mind, together with the paucity in numbers and almost total want of instruction of the few Northern Cavalry, the arm itself, and all belonging to it had become so depreciated in the public estimation of the North, that, at the end of 1861, though they had but 15,000 horse (only 5000 of them regulars) to an army of over 150,000 men, even this small number was considered excessive, and it was proposed to reduce them. The American *terrain* was supposed to be wholly unsuited to the action of Cavalry.

But a great change of opinion regarding them soon took place. It became evident to the North, principally through the stern teachings of adversity—for the Cavalry of General J. E. B. Stuart and the 'Mounted Infantry,' or Mounted Riflemen of the daring guerilla John Morgan, harassed and hunted them to distraction — IT BECAME APPARENT THAT UNDER A DIFFERENT ORGANISATION, THAT SHOULD ADOPT RIFLE-FIRE AS ITS MAIN INSTRUMENT, AND TRAIN THEM TO SUCH TACTICS AS WOULD MAKE IT CONSTANTLY, THAT IS UNIVERSALLY, EFFECTIVE, NOT ONLY COULD CAVALRY STILL BE OF GREAT USE, BUT THAT UNDER AN INTELLIGENT COMPREHENSION OF THIS NEW FEATURE IN WAR, AND UNDER WORTHY LEADING, A GREATER FIELD AND SCOPE THAN IN ANY PREVIOUS PERIOD OF THE HISTORY OF WAR WAS NOW OPENED UP TO HORSEMEN.

The fruit of this idea could of course not be developed at once. It began to gain ground in 1862; but as late as the middle of 1864 the Northern Cavalry had had no striking effect on the War.

The new organisation then adopted was one to which we in England are almost absolute strangers. Those who have been interested in the Kaffir wars have occasionally

heard of great results gained by the Cape Mounted Rifles; but what occurs in our remote colonies seldom attracts much attention amongst us. The new system adopted in America was not entirely similar even to that of the Cape Corps, who use a short, handy, double-barrelled rifled carbine, *but fire principally from the saddle.* The Northern so-called Cavalry, *in reality Mounted Riflemen*, followed a different, and more effective plan. No longer committing itself on the antiquated European Cavalry theory to attempt impossibilities, or at best successes whose cost far exceeds their value, it sought to gain more substantial and telling results than are ever to be obtained by uselessly exposing the bodies of brave men and valuable horses as plain and easily hit marks to rifle fire, delivered often from behind cover — a system which makes the riders simply so many moving targets for 900 yards, all to next to no purpose. IT ADOPTED UNIVERSALLY FOR MOUNTED MEN THE BEST 'REPEATING' RIFLES — GENERALLY THE SPENCER—AND REDUCED TO AN ORGANISED SYSTEM OF DRILL AND MANŒUVRE THE PRACTICE OF FIGHTING WITH THEM *ON FOOT*, ALWAYS WHERE POSSIBLE FROM BEHIND COVER; THE HORSES MEANWHILE, EACH HELD BY A MOUNTED MAN, OR NEVER BY LESS THAN ONE MAN TO TWO HORSES, BEING KEPT OUT OF HARM'S WAY FARTHER TO THE REAR, BUT READY TO GALLOP UP AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE TO PICK UP THEIR MEN, OR TO MEET THEM HALF-WAY IN FALLING BACK, FOR ANY NECESSARY CHANGE OF POSITION. *Mounted* supports and reserves were always kept in hand behind the dismounted 'skirmish line,' and watching its flanks. Some of the most striking and complete results of Cavalry action obtained throughout the American War were due to these mounted reserves being rapidly moved round to a flank, hidden by or under cover of the rifle fire kept up in front; and thus by gaining unperceived the enemy's flank or rear, they found occasion opportune for a bold unexpected mounted charge. Or if they found the enemy prepared,

their rapid movement to his flank often enabled these reserves, dismounting and seeking cover in their turn, to place the enemy, already heavily engaged in front, between two destructive crossed or converging fires. In a subsequent chapter will be given an instance of success thus gained, of so decisive and telling a nature as is totally impossible to European Cavalry under their present organisation, and which had an immediate and conclusive effect on the War. Troops thus armed, trained, and instructed, were equal to any contingency, and could act upon any sort of ground. Though called Cavalry, they were, in fact, Mounted Riflemen, and the breech-loading or repeating rifle their principal arm. But not less than any, even the most 'dashing' European Cavalry, were they ready and eager to draw swords and charge on fitting opportunity. An unwillingness to do so has been charged against them by two recent English military writers, who ignoring, or not being aware of, the more effective system above set forth, have judged them entirely by the standard of the 'dashing' European Cavalry theory. This backwardness to charge *may* have existed in the early years of the war, from defective individual instruction in riding and swordsmanship, making the half-drilled men of the Northern Horse lack confidence in themselves; but, in 1864 and 1865, all idea of perpetrating the reckless ineffectual folly of a mounted charge, except under circumstances manifestly offering a favourable opportunity worth the loss of life, had been systematically eliminated from their practice. And though a charge was resorted to without hesitation whenever there were commensurate results to be gained (see pages 77 and 98), as a general thing the Northern Cavalry produced ten times greater good, *without any considerable loss to themselves*, by making a liberal use, dismounted, of their terrible 'repeating' fire, and looking upon the horse merely as the means of more rapid locomotion for



tactical manœuvre, and for great strategic marches and pursuits.

Let us now look, but necessarily very briefly, at the teaching of the late Campaign in Bohemia, as to the action of Cavalry under the recently changed condition of rifled arms.

Here the results are strongly marked; and it is worthy of note that they are, generally, precisely the same as those furnished by the War in America.

As in America, so in Germany, no such great result as those sweeping and decisive blows dealt by the Cavalry of the days of the old musket has been obtained by the Horse on either side; though both Austria and Prussia possessed a Cavalry very numerous, splendidly mounted, in the highest state of individual and collective efficiency, and each animated, according to all accounts published before and in the early part of the campaign, by a high spirit of desire to cross swords with its enemy, and to distinguish itself by some brilliant action.

Now, as breech-loaders were in use only on *one* side, the Prussian, *they* will not account for the want of decisive action of the *Prussian* Cavalry, though they may well explain the want of success of the Austrian Horse. On the contrary, as we know, being armed with breech-loaders, the Prussian Dragoons, notably on one critical occasion, were able thoroughly to foil the attempts of the Austrian Uhlans* to close with them; which attempts they met by repeated volleys delivered not from on foot, but *from the saddle*, the squadron firing immediately facing about and loading again while trotting to the rear; and so, by alternate squadrons, firing and retiring, constantly evading their eager enemy, till the rapidly delivered volleys of the needle-gun, or carbine, had knocked down so many men and horses, and so shaken the order of the rest, that on suddenly turning round and charging, the

* Lancers.

Prussians, who had suffered no loss meanwhile, were able easily to ride over and overthrow the remainder.*

This in itself, irrespective of the shaken *morale* of the entire Austrian army, produced most naturally, from the earliest days of the war, by the dispiriting accounts circulated amongst their soldiers of the terrific slaughter the Prussian infantry needle gun had made at Nachod, Skalitz, and Gitschin, is quite sufficient to account for the complete failure of the *Austrian* cavalry—highly as it had been extolled before the war—to accomplish anything worth speaking of throughout the campaign.

BUT HOW SHALL WE ACCOUNT FOR THE UTTER ABSENCE OF GREAT RESULTS FROM THE ACTION OF THE *PRUSSIAN* CAVALRY, WHO HAD ALL THESE ADVANTAGES ON THEIR SIDE? By 'absence of great results,' we mean no disparagement of their discipline or bravery, but simply to draw attention to the entire failure on their part to achieve such a complete discomfiture of the beaten foe, whom the superior fire of their infantry, and the higher strategy of their generals, had driven from every position—such crushing and decisive discomfiture as Frederick's Hussars wrought at Rosbach and Zorndorf, and Blücher's untiring and pitiless pursuers after Waterloo.

Surely and confessedly the men and officers showed themselves worthy descendants of their forefathers—and none of their forefathers ever had a better field for the play of sword and lance than the retiring crowds of Austrians presented in their retreat from Königgrätz. We read glowing descriptions of the immense force of Cavalry

* It is just possible that the cautious line of action the Prussian Cavalry sometimes wisely took, and their readiness to use the needle gun instead of the sabre, were in some degree attributable to the fact that there was serving on the Prussian staff Major Heros von Borcke, an officer who, having ridden by the side of the Confederate Cavalry General Stuart, from the beginning of the American war, till dangerously wounded in May 1864, was able to testify to his countrymen by personal experience, how effective rifle fire may be made in the hands of horsemen.

the Prussians held ready in hand, after their Infantry had partly turned and partly forced that position; it has been painted by a most graphic pen how this splendid Cavalry rode over and topped the ridge behind which they had heretofore been sheltered, exultingly saw, with eager delight, the thick flying masses of Austrians in the valley at their feet, and prepared to swoop down upon their prey.

But where shall we look for the record of the results so much vivid description has led us to anticipate? Has any, even Prussian, account given us the details of what that magnificent and eager body of cavalry really effected? We have not met with any such account. Surely if the results had been so satisfactory, a legitimate and honourable pride would not have failed to blazon them to the world, with Prussia's other widely-spread triumphs. We look in vain for anything of the sort. But we find, on the contrary, in the 'Times' of August 30, 1866, the following passages from a letter from the Special Correspondent of that paper at Pardubitz—himself, be it remembered, somewhat of an enthusiast as to what sabre cavalry can do—that tell a very different tale.

'But Pardubitz will be a standing reproach to the Prussians in a military sense. It is an easy hour's march for cavalry from the field of Königgrätz. It was 4·30 P.M. when the Austrians retreated. Their pontoons were principally at Opatovic, three miles below Königgrätz, and *not* covered by the guns of the fort. The Crown Prince had some 13,000 or 14,000 sabres which had not been used at all. The cavalry under Prince Frederick Charles mustered at least 10,000. But these horsemen, who have been maintaining their superiority on all occasions to the Austrian Horse, not only never ventured to press them as they covered the retreat, not only refrained from moving towards Pardubitz, but never appeared even near Opatovic. They had four hours' clear daylight, but the retreating

Austrians and the cavalry which covered them to the last, were plied with shot and shell, instead of sabre and lance, and the cavalry (Prussian) did not approach Pardubitz till about noon on July 4, some of the Austrian rear guard having only entered it an hour before on their way from the field. Had they swept round the Austrian flank, and made their appearance on the road between Holic and Hohenmauth on the morning of July 4, they might have swept up half an army for their pains. At all events, they have not left themselves any ground to taunt their late enemy with want of enterprise.'

Now this want of vigour in pursuit—to call it by no stronger name—presents a result so strikingly similar to an exactly parallel failure on the part of the French cavalry after Solferino in 1859 (see p. 45), that we cannot but attribute it to the same cause, until some better cause is assigned. In this case, at all events, there was no terrible storm of rain, hail, and wind which can be blamed as having held back the pursuers, and yet unaccountably allowed the pursued to go free and preserve or regain their order in retreat. **IT IS NO USE LONGER TO ATTEMPT TO DISGUISE THE FACTS. LET ENTHUSIASTS OF THE SABRE AND LANCE 'CHARGING' SCHOOL SAY WHAT THEY WILL, SINCE LONG-RANGE RIFLES BECAME GENERALLY INTRODUCED —NOT BREECH-LOADERS, MARK—BUT SIMPLE MUZZLE-LOADING 900 YARD RIFLES, SUCH AS ALL ARMIES HAVE CARRIED IN GREATER OR LESS NUMBERS SINCE 1854–55, THERE HAS BEEN NO REPETITION OF THE OLD-WORLD SUCCESSES OF MASSES OF CAVALRY AGAINST INFANTRY.**

Nor has there been even any great attempt to achieve such success, if we except Balaklava; and no one probably would deliberately desire to repeat *that* experiment.

If it is *not* increased rifle range that has worked this vast change, perhaps the admirers of the 'dashing' school of action will tell us what it *is*; will explain what potent spell it is that has paralysed the arms of French, Prussian,



Austrian, and American horsemen alike, in mid-career, and given an equally complete and mysterious immunity to infantry in both hemispheres?

To any unprejudiced observer there can be but one answer to the question.

Henceforth, as heretofore, wherever cavalry meet cavalry *alone*, fire-arms being ignored on both sides, the victory will be to that side whose horsemen are the best mounted, most skilled with their arms, and most ably handled and led. **BUT WHERE CAVALRY ARE OPPOSED TO INFANTRY, THEIR SUPREMACY IS A THING OF THE PAST, UNLESS THEY YIELD TO THE PROGRESS OF THE AGE—THEMSELVES ADOPT THE RIFLE, AND ADAPT THEIR TACTICS TO ITS USE. UNDER THIS NEW ORGANISATION—AS WE SHALL SHOW MORE FULLY IN TREATING OF THE SURRENDER OF LEE'S ARMY AFTER THE FALL OF RICHMOND—A WIDER SPHERE OF USEFULNESS AND ENTERPRISE THAN CAVALRY HAVE EVER ENJOYED BEFORE, IS JUST OPENING OUT TO THEM.** But on these conditions alone.

That the old supremacy of cavalry has passed away is, as has been shown, true even of infantry armed with muzzle-loading rifles. *It is of course true with tenfold force and application of an infantry fire that unites the rapidity of breech-loaders to the precision of ordinary rifles.*

Within eighteen months from this date—that is by the time all armies have breech-loaders of one sort or another—cavalry must either follow in the same path, and thereby, under enlightened guiding, not only regain the relative superiority denied them for the last twelve years, but enter on a more glorious career than even in the palmy days of Ziethen and of Seidlitz; or, by adhering doggedly to the traditions of a state of things for ever passed away, they must sink to occupy, *and to acknowledge that they occupy*, a thoroughly secondary and subordinate position in war. The stern reality of modern warfare is destined to strip the mask from all mere seemings; it will no

longer tolerate useless shams, however graceful and brilliant.

For England especially, a country rich in money and means, but comparatively poor in men, there is a terrible daily increasing necessity that our engines of war, be they either mechanical appliances, or the more costly and slowly replaceable tactical organisations of men and horses, should *be the very best of their sort.* We can afford no make-believes, however bright and pretty they may look on parade and field-day, or however they may be hallowed by time-honoured tradition. A stern sound economy peremptorily demands that every man and horse we muster in our own thin ranks *should represent and wield as great actual destroying power as any similar unit in the world.*

We desire to make no unnecessarily invidious comparisons, but only to draw attention to such changes going on around us as may be imitated, at least in some modified form, for public benefit. In the light of the sad truth, that, disguise it as we may, *the value of the soldier is measured by his efficiency to kill,* let anyone conversant with both types compare the efficiency of the two schools of horsemen drawn below. On the one hand, one of our jaunty, smart, burnished, 'well set up' hussars, armed with his yard of blunt carving-knife (for what sword habitually kept in a steel scabbard is anything better?), and his 500 or 600 yards' rifle-carbine, intended to be harmlessly and playfully fired from the saddle, in *mounted* skirmishing from the back of a horse in perpetual motion, whose steadiness he cannot count upon for any fraction of a minute; or that still more gorgeous anachronism borrowed from the Middle Ages, the British lancer, with his flag and pole, whose only chance of hurting anybody but himself is that the footman whom he rides at shall have thrown away his rifle, and have lost even sufficient presence of mind to dodge across the path under his

horse's nose and make him shy or swerve, and thus to avoid the point of the weapon that is only dangerous to a perfectly quiescent or perfectly defenceless body. Now, let anyone having a knowledge of the subject contrast this sort of thing with—on the other hand—the destroying power of a horseman, armed with a breech-loader carrying 1000 yards, and giving 10 to 12 shots a minute, of whom you can see nothing but the quick flashes of his rifle as he lies hid behind cover, whilst his horse is carefully held sheltered by a mounted comrade 200 or 300 yards behind, yet instantly available to carry him at speed to a new position for flanking fire—and say which system commends itself most to common-sense Englishmen.

That which deliberately makes horse and man a target over 800 or 900 yards of level ground, and all in order that the scanty survivors out of twice their number may do such feeble damage as may be accomplished by a blow from a sword or thrust from a lance (deadly enough, we admit, when fairly delivered, but than which nothing *can* be harder to deliver effectively, nor easier to parry or avoid); or that system which, accepting recent changes as existent facts, rapidly adapts them to its own advantage, recognises the breech-loader as the destroying instrument, and the horse as the mere carrying machine, which, to be kept constantly effective to execute the rapid changes of position that 'repeating' fire requires, must be kept out of harm's way under cover, like the firer.

Which of the two—the chivalrous or the practical—is likely to give the greatest results with the least expenditure of life and money?

And is any man prepared to argue, or if he does so argue to expect anyone to believe him, that, as has been stated by some, no soldier can be made proficient both as a horseman and as a rifle shot? This is actually an argument that *has* been used in former days against the adoption of mounted riflemen. That as it takes three years to make

a perfect dragoon (and no wonder, considering the feats of legerdemain, the almost impossibility he is required to perform, of hurting his enemy with such weapons as lance and sabre after riding 900 yards as a target); therefore, if you superadd the duties of a marksman, requiring an additional course of training, the time required will be indefinitely prolonged, and the teaching never ended. What! are there no men in this country—let our sportsmen, gentlemen, farmers, yeomen by thousands in every county answer the question—who are equally good across country and through the stubble with a breech-loader?

Or do our own Horse Artillerymen ride a bit the worse, because they have invariably to dismount before they unlimber and handle their guns? or because they undergo a partially scientific instruction?

The question is not one open to conjecture. Even if there were not the example of our own Cape Mounted Riflemen—or the thousands of American Horse, both North and South, to show that the double capacity for action is quite within the scope of a moderately drilled soldier,—amongst our Volunteers there has been for at least five years past at Droxford, in South Hants, a body of mounted riflemen, certainly able to give a good account both in speed over all country, and in destructive fire from cover, of at least twice their own number of the best sabre cavalry in the world, even though they have the disadvantage of being armed—as yet—only with muzzle-loaders.

This question of our adoption of the mounted rifle principle has, for us English, in three distinct and separate fields, a more important bearing than for any other nation in the world; and on those three fields it holds out to us the prospect of a greater and more immediate saving and profit than it presents an opportunity for to any other people.

The first is, in the greater efficiency of our splendid but small Regular Cavalry.



Second.—The cheaper and yet equally if not more effective tenure of India.

Third.—As a question of Home Defence, the immediate formation of our 14,200 Yeomanry Cavalry, who are now neither good regulars nor good irregulars, but something intermediate and indefinite, into *the most formidable body of horsemen for all defensive fighting that exists in the world.*

To sum up briefly on the *First* of these heads. To keep our cavalry on its present principles of instruction and training, when it has been shown how infinitely more destructive, therefore efficient, it can be made by adopting breech-loading rifle tactics, is as great and wanton a waste of power, as if, let us say for illustration's sake, the Mint, possessing the multiplied facility its machinery gives it of turning out sovereigns under die and stamp by so many thousands a day, were to elect instead to shut up its machinery, and set all its employés to work, each on a separate bench, to clip and file sovereigns out of the sheets of metal, by hand labour alone. That is about the relative proportion of economy of strength in the killing power of a cavalry that works with the breech-loading rifle, where all is done by machinery with next to no risk to shooter or to horse, and of one which, disdaining all common-place aids of cover and of mechanical means of destruction, chivalrously elects to brave all possible disadvantages which it can combine *against* itself—to ride over 900 yards of open ground as a living target all the way, and then to be content for the reward and end of such immense risk with such feeble harm as it can do to its foe with the easily averted lance or sabre. All this be it remembered against infantry, *whose chance of making a successful shot now increases with every foot that the horseman draws nearer to them.**

* Lately at Hythe ten men who had never handled a breech-loader before, except at the preliminary drill, were set to fire 10 rounds each with the Snider

We were recently told, on high authority, that 'arms of precision are only dangerous at a distance.' But what will the most confident and enthusiastic horseman now say about his chance against a footman who can not only give him from fifteen to twenty shots while he is closing, but when he *has* closed—that is, to within five yards—has nothing to do but to keep his bayonet pointed at the horse's nose, and thus keep the rider at bay while he rapidly 'dodges' to evade cut or thrust, and is able all the time, *without moving his rifle from the hip*, to load and fire as many rounds as he pleases? If, however, Routine must have its way, and it requires another Balaklava to put lance and sabre in that subordinate place in the English Cavalry mind which they already hold in the estimation of nearly all the rest of the world, let us, at all events, so far give our hussars and lancers fair play, as to do the utmost to prepare and clear the way for the perilous action of their rush. Let us have, at once, Mounted Riflemen in the proportion at all events, of one battalion of 500 strong to each brigade of cavalry in the field; so that the hussars and lancers may be kept out of rifle if not of cannon fire, till the decisive moment comes for them to act, and meanwhile be covered

(converted Enfield) at 500 yards. *The whole* 100 *rounds were fired in one minute and thirty seconds, and* 70 *per cent. of the shots were hits.* With the Enfield, to fire 10 shots each, from ten men, in six minutes thirty seconds was considered good. The Snider gives therefore a rapidity of fire rather more than *fourfold*, even with unpractised men; and its precision also is greater than that of the Enfield, from improvements that have been made in the bullet.

This experiment was made with targets representing infantry, or only six feet high: with cavalry standing at least two feet higher, probably the hits would have been at least ten per cent. more, or 80 per cent. And in this no account is taken of the reserved fire of the two kneeling ranks, which would be held till the cavalry had surmounted, if they could ever be brought to face, the fire mentioned above.

Reduce the whole effect by a full half to allow for the flurry of action, and the remainder is quite sufficient to bear out the assertion that breech-loading rifles have practically annulled a sabre and lance cavalry.



in their front by their dismounted rifle skirmishers in great numbers.

Thus the whole being a mounted body together, all its movements can be uniform. The dismounted riflemen will skirmish on the enemy's front or partially on his flank till their searching fire discovers his weak point. This information carried instantly at speed to the line of the led horses, and the *mounted* reserve of the battalion, is as instantly communicated to the cavalry formed out of rifle-fire behind favourable bends of ground. These then act instantly and decisively, either in a rapid charge to the front, *which would then be delivered under the most favourable circumstances in which such a manœuvre can be performed*—or they move rapidly round and threaten the enemy's flank or rear; a part, the old reserve, of the mounted rifle battalion immediately moving out in the new direction to cover the new front as dismounted skirmishers. Or again, suppose the cavalry which has charged forward through the intervals of the dismounted skirmishers covering it, is repulsed; the very instant it repasses through them in retreat, they recommence fire and check all pursuit. Thus giving it immediate shelter behind their line to reform at leisure, *without one inch of ground having been lost.*

THUS INDEED, IF EVER AGAIN, THE LANCE AND SABRE WOULD HAVE FAIR PLAY AGAINST INFANTRY.

The combined action we have been describing above can be accomplished in no other way.

It is not possible to do it by attaching light infantry, even the swiftest and most highly trained, to cavalry temporarily.

For as anyone can see in a moment, from their different rates of movement—though on the first carefully combined manœuvre, infantry allowed the necessary time to get into position *might* once cover and clear the way for an advancing cavalry—yet, ever afterwards, the hundred

changing circumstances of position of fight would leave them nowhere. They could not possibly keep up with the cavalry.

But three regiments of cavalry, a battery or two of horse artillery, *and* a battalion of mounted riflemen, would be a tactical unit, compact and self-sufficing, that might still accomplish great things against an indifferent or shaken infantry.

The mounted riflemen need never for an instant delay the manœuvres of cavalry. They would act as rapidly as horse artillery, and with, in some respects, greater effect. They are in fact another mode of multiplying horse-artillery fire, with the exception that their range is limited to 1,100 yards.

For example's sake we will suppose an instance. And here for illustration we will suppose no artillery to be with a cavalry brigade, but only their own battalion of mounted rifles. The general direction in which it is intended to produce effect on an enemy's position is pointed out to the cavalry general of brigade. As he approaches he finds that the part to be attacked is covered by a line of the enemy's infantry skirmishers, concealed but firing.

He halts his cavalry regiments behind favourable features of ground at 1,500 yards or more from the hostile skirmishers. His rifle battalion, supposing it to be of six troops,* is divided into three parts of two troops each—skirmishers, support, and reserve.

Of these the reserve halt at 500 yards in front of their own cavalry, or 1,000 yards from the enemy, dismount, and stand at their horses' heads—the whole body however being behind such cover as is available—detaching at once small patroles of observation to each flank and numerous mounted connecting links to preserve their

* The present establishment of the Cape Mounted Rifles is six troops of seventy-five rank and file each.

communication with the supports. The four troops who are about to form skirmishers and supports, being now under distant fire, move forward at a brisk canter—diverging to their future positions as they advance. At 300 yards from the reserve, or 700 from the enemy, the two supports halt, each behind where the centre of its respective troop of skirmishers will be. The supports remain mounted, behind cover if possible; if none is available, then in motion alternately to one flank or another—so as to present less certain mark. They also detach patroles to both outer flanks—two or three sharp-sighted intelligent noncommissioned officers—to keep in constant motion but ever watchful to signalise immediately any attempt to outflank their skirmishers. The supports would also throw out a few but carefully selected mounted connecting links between themselves and the skirmishers, to carry messages rapidly.

From the moment of getting under the distant fire of the enemy the skirmishers would have been gradually spreading out like a fan—so as to cover and divide between them the whole extent of front to be occupied. From 700 yards of the enemy to 400 yards from him they would go at speed—so as to incur as little loss as possible. At 400 yards from the enemy there would be a momentary halt; one half of the two troops—that is every alternate file both front and rear rank—would dismount, either throw themselves flat on their faces and commence fire instantly, or run forward on foot to any better cover within fifty or eighty yards in front of them, as might have been previously ordered. The alternate files would remain mounted, but the instant the foot of the dismounting man was out of the stirrup, his mounted comrade would turn to the rear and lead his horse towards the supports at a gallop. These led horses would either be kept 100 yards in front, or a few yards in rear of the support, according to the accidents of covering ground available—the prin-

ciple being to keep them as near the dismounted skirmishers as their safety from fire, which is the first consideration, would allow.

Two troops thus skirmishing would give about seventy effective shooting men (the other half remaining mounted holding horses) to cover the front on which the half, or first line, of three regiments of cavalry might subsequently advance. This first line would probably cover—supposing the three regiments to muster 400 sabres each—about 380 yards; which would place seventy sharpshooters or thirty-five files, at about eleven to twelve yards apart, in two ranks, or five to six yards apart in single rank, allowing a little extra for slightly overlapping the flanks. This would be a feeble fire indeed to be extended over that front; but allowing for the increased effect of breech-loaders, and of men perfectly covered, it would be quite sufficiently searching to show, after a few minutes' duration, whether or not, and if so *where*, there existed a weak place for the cavalry to take advantage of.*

Could this service of investigation, *of feeling the way for a cavalry charge*, be equally well performed, and at anything approaching the same small loss in men and horses, *by any number of hussars skirmishing mounted?* Could they even venture to show themselves thus in the open, mounted, for any time—say ten minutes, within 400 yards of the skirmishers of a division of infantry lying concealed on their faces in grass or behind banks? And must not any body of cavalry in these breech-loading days, that

* Or if the brigade of three regiments of Cavalry advanced in three instead of two lines, as it probably would, the front to be covered would not be more than 240 yards; which would place the Riflemen only 7 yards apart, or 8 yards allowing for space to overlap the flanks.

Thus two Riflemen to every 12 yards is the *minimum* that a Battalion 500 strong would throw out. As occasion required, of course they could bring up all their supports and reserve to the limit of one half the battalion (the rest holding the horses), the cavalry behind them occupying their places; and by reinforcing their skirmishers, could double or treble the volume of their fire.

is led forward to attack *without* such careful preliminary searching of the intervening ground and of the eligible spot for attack, be considered as merely hurled blindly and recklessly forward to its own destruction?

If thus covered by riflemen, cavalry, when repulsed, would be sheltered almost immediately; without riflemen its retreat might involve the safety of the neighbouring division, or of the whole army. Be it borne in mind that we do not advocate this small proportion of riflemen for cavalry—one battalion to three regiments—as *sufficient; on the contrary, we believe that the more of them you have the more effective will your cavalry be*, but this small number is better than none.

This is not mere theoretical speculation; further on, the chapter that relates the operations before and after the battle of Five Forks, fought on March 31, and April 1, 1865, which mainly led to the fall of Richmond, and preluded the collapse of the whole Southern Confederacy, will show what this mode of fighting *has* actually effected in war.

The superiority of mounted riflemen for all the minor operations of war—for advanced and rear guards, outposts, patrols, convoys, and escorts—is too obvious to require discussion. What we are contending for here is that by this means *alone* can cavalry regain their lost supremacy *in the line of battle*, in general actions on a large scale.

The second great field open to mounted riflemen—viz., the becoming the basis for a more economical but equally secure tenure of India—requires to be treated in a separate chapter, the Fourth.

The third head under which this principle effects the improvement of our whole organisation is AS APPLIED TO THE YEOMANRY. These 14,200 horsemen, a most high-spirited and patriotic part of our long-established and time-honoured constitutional national defence, occupy a somewhat anomalous and unsatisfactory position just

now. In these days of rapid and precise rifle fire, not even the most enthusiastic of the 'charging' school of cavalry theorists pretends to assert that any but the most perfectly and constantly drilled and instructed cavalry are able fairly to cope with infantry. This therefore the Yeomanry, whose occupations and position prevent anything like continuous assembly for instruction, can never aspire to do.

But there is no reason why so large and valuable a mass of material—both in men and horses—should be condemned to the inferior work of carrying messages as orderlies, or to merely making a show at a distance, without venturing to close, in case of invasion. The remedy is easy and pleasant Though no amount of instruction that they can ever afford time to take will fit this branch to ride in serried squadrons in the field, a few days' drill in the year to the simple independent tactics of mounted riflemen—a drill quite within the compass of their annual training—with a few odd hours now and then devoted to rifle practice, whenever half-a-dozen men could get to the neighbouring Volunteer range together, would make them, at no expense but the supply of the short breech-loaders and the ammunition, the most formidable body of guerilla combatants in the world. Their own excellent individual cross-country riding and knowledge of every by-path and lane in their neighbourhood, only require to have grafted on to them a few days' simple drill on 'mounted rifle' principles, and a little steady rifle practice as an amusement, to make even a couple of dozen of them, shooting from behind hedgerows and banks, and with their own trusty hunters close behind ready for continual change from cover to cover—a more harassing, wearing, intangible obstacle to invasion, than five hundred of them could be, in their present state of a second-rate imitation of Regular Heavy Cavalry, an article now of very questionable efficiency at its best.

This would put them on a level with the spirit of progress all around; instead of falling behind, they would henceforth lead the Volunteer movement.

Surely a principle that combines the love of the horse with the love of the gun must come home to the heart of every sport-loving Englishman. The mounted rifleman is the impersonation and embodiment of the military progress of the age; but he is, moreover, the union and full development of the two strongest tastes, most deeply rooted and most ardently cherished, that every Briton has had from his boyhood. The breech-loading Snider, or some better rifle, carried rapidly from point to point of cover, on the back of a weight-carrying hunter, by many a comfortable old gentleman too stout for much rapid work on foot, is destined, we hope, to become as much the special weapon of all ranks of our countrymen for national defence as was the favourite longbow in the days of Cressy and Poictiers.

The idea of mounted riflemen is not an original one with our trans-Atlantic brethren; it has been domesticated amongst ourselves for the last seven years, since 1859, or at least two years before the Americans thought of it, in the excellent mounted riflemen raised in Devonshire by Sir Thomas Acland, and in Hampshire by Colonel Bower. Let us but give it a fair trial on a larger scale, and it will create a new power for Home Defence, accessible to every good horseman, with next to no drill, making every man who hunts and shoots an efficient soldier in time of need. This will indeed enable us gaily to bid defiance to invasion, and give us such a body of Light Horsemen as no other country in the world can show.

CHAPTER III.

WHAT MOUNTED RIFLEMEN CAN ACCOMPLISH IN WAR, ILLUSTRATED BY THE OPERATIONS BEFORE AND AFTER THE FALL OF RICHMOND IN APRIL 1865, TILL THE SURRENDER OF LEE'S ARMY.

At page 26 we have quoted the American Cavalry, as they stood after their latest improvements of organisation in 1865, as the model on the tactical principle of which our battalions of Mounted Riflemen should be formed. In order to vindicate and support this recommendation, and to show in detail on what grounds it rests, we now propose to give a brief sketch of the very prominent part that the Northern Cavalry took in the operations that led to the fall of Petersburg and the evacuation of Richmond.

Part that the Northern Cavalry took in the fall of Richmond.

It will save repetition hereafter, to state here that by 'Cavalry'—when speaking of the American horse—we mean what *we* should call Mounted Riflemen. To understand these operations, the reader must refer carefully to the accompanying sketch maps. No military reading is intelligible, or indeed worth the waste of time, without maps on which to trace the movements.

Up to the end of December 1864, all the efforts of the north to take Richmond had been unavailing. At no time had the defence been more stubborn or more deadly to the Northern troops than in the autumn of 1864.

Lee's position in December 1864.

Lee still showed an undaunted front. Richmond itself, covered by three separate and almost impregnable lines of works, formed but the left point of *appui* of a vast entrenched camp extending to and embracing at its southern

extremity Petersburg on the Appomattox river—22 miles further south. These vast entrenchments had defied all the Northern raids. But the sphere of defence of the Confederacy had been gradually but surely, and latterly rapidly, narrowed. The toils of the hunter were fast closing round it. The 'anaconda principle,' which Grant had adopted and announced as his military policy, was fast hastening to overwhelm it. The North had won almost the entire west. Sherman's great march from Atalanta, in Georgia, to the Atlantic coast, had commenced on November 15, 1864, after he had succeeded in misleading and eluding Hood, and was now gradually cutting and sapping all the sources of supply for Richmond which still remained open in Georgia and Alabama.

The Northern coils gradually closing round Richmond.

Sherman's progress.

By December 22, Sherman had captured Savannah; and now, in January 1865, was advancing northerly through Charleston, in close communication with the Federal fleet, and with the design of operating on the south side of Richmond.

Three great lines of supply, however, still fed that capital, and nourished the resistance of the armies of the South. The first line, commencing from the north, was the James River Canal, bordering the river of the same name, running along its north bank nearly parallel to its course, and passing direct into Richmond itself from Lynchburg.

Richmond has three lines of supply.

The second was the railway from Richmond to Danville, a town about 140 miles south-west of the capital.

The third, the South-side Railway, leaving Petersburg in a south-westerly direction, and connecting with the Danville line at Burkesville Junction, about 52 miles from Petersburg, and thence running nearly due west through Farmville to Lynchburg.

These three lines might be reduced to two by operating first against the most exposed of the three—the James River Canal, which was accessible, under the special conditions of American warfare, to Cavalry, especially to

One line easily assailable.

The other two better covered.

a force coming from the Shenandoah Valley. To cut the other two was a more serious affair, as their position caused them to be almost entirely covered by Richmond and Petersburg. As the whole tenure of this vast position depended on its lines of supply being preserved intact, the actions for their defence might be expected to be the more stubborn.

Grant's position before Richmond.

Grant's position at the end of December extended from the James River at Harrison's Landing south-west for twenty miles; the White House on the Pamunkey River being his main base of supply. From Harrison's Landing his posts continued in one vast fortified line of detached forts and redoubts, with an advanced entrenched picket line, south-westerly to a point more than a mile west of the Petersburg and Weldon Railway, which it embraced. His line of works thus covered, and had behind it, the City Point Railway, by which it drew its supplies from Washington.

Grant had frankly declared his strategy to consist of the hope of wearing out the South, as he afterwards expressed it in his final despatch, 'by hammering continuously, until by attrition, if in no other way,' and by weight of superior numbers, he should succeed in crushing it. He had avowed his intention 'to fight it out on that line' of the peninsula, between the James and the York rivers, 'if it should take all the summer.'

Grant's plans.

His plan of operations was now more fully developed. He determined, about January 31, 1865, to extend his fortified line of circumvallation gradually, by advancing its left round the south-western extremity of the Petersburg position, till flanking columns from his extreme left should be able to get on to the South-side Railway and cut that line of supply, the loss of which it was anticipated would lead to the fall of Richmond. Efforts to do this, carried on by his 2nd, 5th, 6th, and 9th Army Corps, between February 5 and 8, 1865, failed, in

Grant determines to turn the Confederate right and cut in on their two southern lines of supply.

consequence of the stern resistance of the Southern Army under Lee himself. Fully appreciating the importance of thus defending their right flank, they fought desperately, and repulsed all attempts on it.

Desultory fighting in February 1865.

But the Federal fighting on those days resulted in their gaining an advanced position, which they immediately entrenched, up to Hatcher's Run (stream).* The City Point Railway was at once continued up to this advanced post.

After this came a lull till near the end of March 1865.

Grant determined to carry out his plan mainly with Sheridan's cavalry.

Then, in furtherance of his plan for reducing Richmond by acting on its communications and starving its supplies, Grant determined on a series of *wide-moving, turning raids, which were carried out almost entirely by Cavalry of the Mounted Rifle type.* Grant's greatest apprehension now was lest Lee should abandon Richmond and Petersburg, and retiring rapidly to Lynchburg or Danville, there unite with Johnston's army, and prolong the war through another year. His great object was therefore to cut the railroads which allowed Lee and Johnston to communicate.

Major-General P. Sheridan, who had been one of the earliest Northern generals to develop the Mounted Rifle arm, was now commanding at Winchester, in the Shenandoah Valley, about 120 miles north-west of Richmond, a force of which one part was 10,000 Cavalry armed and trained on this plan.

Sheridan's march from the Shenandoah.

His corps, in all about 30,000 men, was watching Early's Confederates. He was now ordered to make over the command of his Infantry to General Hancock, and to march with all the Cavalry to Lynchburg, to destroy the railway there, and the James River Canal, then keeping well away westward to cut down upon and tear up the Danville railroad; and finally to move southward and join Sherman near Goldsboro or Raleigh in North Carolina.

* See Map No. 2.

His strength.

Leaving Winchester on February 27 with the two Cavalry divisions of Generals Custer and Deven, and one other brigade,* the whole under General Merritt, he made 83 miles in three days, and on February 29, encamped near Staunton, skirmishing with the Confederate Cavalry on the way. The Southern General Early, who commanded at Staunton, retired, and Sheridan occupied the town on March 1.

Destroys the northern line of supply.

Then began the work of destruction. Deven was sent east, and destroyed a great part of the Virginia Central Railroad.† On March 2, the whole force moved to Waynesboro, 13 miles.

General Early escaped with loss of many guns, prisoners, and baggage to Charlottesville, after a sharp fight at Fishersville. Here Sheridan halted two days, during which 'the two large iron bridges over the Rivanna River and Moore's Creek were destroyed,' and the railroad for eight miles towards Lynchburg torn up.

On the 6th, Sheridan marched again, 'struck' the James River Canal, near Duguidsville, 15 miles east of Lynchburg—destroying every lock, and in some places the bank of the canal all that distance. He also ruined the railroad from Lynchburg north towards Amherst Court-house, burning all the bridges, blowing up the culverts, and heating and twisting the uptorn rails so as to make them useless.

He found that 'the Canal had been the great feeder of Richmond.' At New Canton the 'guard lock' was destroyed, and the James River let into the canal, carrying away its banks, and washing out its bottom. But at Lynchburg his farther march southwards, and

* Deven's First Cavalry Division	2,400
Custer's Third Division	2,500
One Brigade of the Second Division	800
Total sabres	5,700

† Map No. 1.

consequently his junction with Sherman, became impossible. The swollen state of the river, and the small number of his pontoons, made it impracticable to cross. He had only the alternative either to return to Winchester in the Shenandoah valley, or to march east and join the main army under Grant. He chose the latter, and at noon on March 10, reached the Pamunkey, a few miles from the Whitehouse, thus coming into communication with Grant's extreme right flank. After resting his horses some days, on March 26 he reached the James River, crossed to City Point, and took position in rear of the left of Grant's army.

Sheridan now joins Grant's army.

HE WAS HENCEFORWARD HELD IN READINESS FOR THE EXECUTION OF PROBABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT AND MEMORABLE DUTY EVER ENTRUSTED TO A BODY OF CAVALRY OF EQUAL STRENGTH: NAMELY, TO TURN THE RIGHT OF THE PETERSBURG DEFENCES AND GET POSSESSION OF THE SOUTH-WESTERN END OF THE WORKS THAT HAD SO LONG DEFIED ALL GRANT'S EFFORTS; THENCE TO CUT IN UPON THE SOUTH-SIDE RAILWAY, AND THUS TO FORCE THE ABANDONMENT OF THE POSITION THAT FOR FOUR YEARS HAD BEEN THE ROCK AGAINST WHICH ALL THE WAVES OF NORTHERN WRATH HAD DASHED IN VAIN.

Grant's position before Petersburg now occupied a length of about 25 miles. Behind its right, north of Fort Harrison, were some supports, consisting of General Kautz's Cavalry. Thence, it passed across the James, covering Bermuda Hundred at the junction of that river with the Appomattox, and extending round Petersburg southwesterly as far as the north bank of Hatcher's Run.

Detailed description of Grant's position.

The great bulk of the Northern Army—of which it will be well to keep the two great divisions in mind—was on the right or south bank of the James.

The right wing, called the 'Army of the James,' was commanded by General Ord.

The left wing, called the 'Army of the Potomac,' lay

south of the Appomattox under command of General Meade.

From the Appomattox to the Weldon Railroad ran, encircling Petersburg, a series of strong detached enclosed works, connected by epaulements filling up the intervals. The first large work on this line,* beginning north, was Fort McGilvery; next Fort Steadman; next, three eighths of a mile farther, was Fort Haskell; next Fort Morton, and so on.

Lee's force in Richmond now very weak.

For some days before Sheridan's arrival in camp, it was evident that Lee was meditating a dash on some part of Grant's line. It took place on March 25. At daylight, two Southern divisions, by a sudden rush, seized Fort Steadman, and turned its guns on the neighbouring works. The fire from Fort Haskell, however, eventually checked their farther advance; and after heavy and long protracted firing on both sides, they were driven back, the fort retaken, and all the guns they had seized recaptured.

Confederate attack on the Northern lines repulsed.

They lost, mostly from the men fearing the retreat across the open, and preferring capture, nearly 2,000 men; the Union loss was over 1,000. The Federals made a return forward movement along the whole front, capturing the Confederate 'skirmish line.'

Various signs now tended to show that Lee was very weak in Richmond, and that the fall of that capital could not be long delayed. His whole forces could not have much exceeded, if they amounted to, 42,000 men; while the Federal armies of the James and of the Potomac did not number much under 160,000.

Composition of the turning column detached by Grant.

Now came the detailed execution of Grant's plan. His intention was, that Sheridan, with all the Cavalry, should advance on the extreme left, followed by the 5th Army Corps under General Warren, and the 2nd under

* See Map No. 2.

General Humphries. This was to be the turning column. The remaining Army Corps, the 6th and the 9th, were to hold the lines before Petersburg, and were reinforced for this purpose by large selections from the 24th and 25th Corps, drawn from the army of the James.

The position at Five Forks the object of attack.

The Confederates were known to have, at a place called Five Forks, about twelve miles south-west of Petersburg, a strongly entrenched position, which formed the key and *appui* of their advanced line, and covered the South-side Railroad. From this strong point, they were enabled to repel all attempts at turning their right, and cutting in upon either the South-side or Richmond and Danville Railroads, now their sole remaining channels of supply. Grant's project was therefore gradually to extend his left, *entrenching as he advanced,* till his Cavalry, and the two Infantry Corps supporting them, could turn the Confederate flank and works, overcome their resistance at Five Forks, and cut in on their communications. This would wholly isolate Richmond and Petersburg from their sources of supply to the south, south-west, and west; for it will be remembered that Sheridan, on his march down from the Shenandoah, had destroyed the James River Canal, and greatly damaged and temporarily interrupted the Lynchburg Railway.

Results expected from this blow.

It was confidently expected that success in this attempt would cause the evacuation of both Petersburg and Richmond. When it is recollected that the whole available force of Lee in these two cities had now probably dwindled to less than 43,000 men, who had been upon half rations all through the past winter, it will be seen how all-important to the Northern cause it was that this remnant should be ejected from the stronghold they had maintained for nearly four years, and should be brought face to face in the open field with the overwhelming, well-supplied, and splendidly-appointed numbers of the North.

Richmond now repre-

The heart of the Southern strength, *in fact the*

sented the whole Confederacy.

Confederacy itself, might now be said to be comprised within this vast entrenched position, for, with the exception of less than 20,000 men under General Joseph E. Johnston, now facing more than five times that number under Sherman in North Carolina, it had no forces in the field amounting to an army.

The reader's attention particularly desired to the peculiar capacity of the Federal Cavalry.

In the forthcoming operations, we would ask the reader's particular attention to the prominent part which the peculiar organisation and training of the Northern Cavalry enabled them to play, as distinguished from that that would have fallen to the share of any Cavalry we have in our service under similar circumstances. Sheridan's 10,000 men were, in fact—call them Cavalry, Mounted Riflemen, or what you will—really *Mounted Infantry*, possessing at the same time all the speed, mobility, and dash of good Cavalry. The question will come hereafter, Could any, even the best, troops that we have of this arm have played a similar part if unsupported as Sheridan was, on March 31, by Infantry and Artillery? The answer we shall confidently leave, after the details of their action have been given, to the judgment of all unprejudiced readers who understand the subject.

Sheridan begins his turning march.

March 29, 1865.

Sheridan began his turning march, then, with some 10,000 Horse, forming nine brigades in three divisions, by moving down the Jerusalem Plank Road, towards Ream's Station, at 6 A.M. of March 29, 1865. They built a bridge over the Rowanty Creek, and, resisted merely by some cavalry pickets, moved direct for Dinwiddie Courthouse.* They occupied that town at night, and opened communication with the 5th (Warren's) Corps on their right, which, together with the 2nd Corps, was making the same south-westerly turning movement, only on an *inner* line nearer Petersburg.

The 2nd Corps now extended from Hatcher's Run

* See Map No. 2.

to Gravelly Run, along the Vaughan Road. The 5th Corps prolonged the same line, its right connecting with the left of the 2nd, and its left being across the Quaker Road, within three miles of Dinwiddie Court-house. Both Corps were on this line by 9 A.M. on March 29, *and immediately began to entrench themselves.*

An attack from the Confederates was now momentarily expected; and, accordingly, about 3 P.M., a Southern Division, under General B. Johnson, but without Artillery, assailed them. It was shortly repulsed, principally by the fire of the batteries of the 5th Corps. Early on March 30, a division of the 24th Corps took up the connected line on the right of the 2nd, and was itself connected with the main position of Grant's army by a brigade from the 6th Corps. There was now, therefore, a continuous line of partially entrenched position from the James River to near Dinwiddie.

Southern attempt to check the movement.

March 30. 1865.

Four brigades of Cavalry, under General Merritt, were now detached from Sheridan's extreme left to reconnoitre towards Five Forks. The advanced brigade, under Deven, drove back the Confederate Cavalry to the works there, but was itself repulsed in turn by their Infantry.

The Federals reconnoitre the Five Forks position.

The Southern entrenchments were found to cover the White Oak Road (which runs westerly from the Boydton Road to the South-side rail). The Confederates were discovered to be posted in force all along the White Oak Road as far as Hatcher's Run, and all attempts to turn them or get to their rear by these four brigades failed for that day. By night of the 30th, the 5th Corps had advanced northerly as far as the junction of the Quaker and Boydton roads, and about three quarters of a mile west of its position of the previous day.

On the right of the 5th Corps the 2nd made a corresponding move, with its right still near Hatcher's Run. General Sheridan remained at and near Dinwiddie, and covered the left flank and rear.

March 30, 1865. Evening.

The Five Forks' position now became the objective point of attack. Five roads meet here, three of which lead back to the South-side rail. The front of the position along the White Oak Road was strongly fortified with logs and earth, and the approaches all blocked with felled trees. Numerous rifle-pits for sharpshooters also covered it.

Early on Friday morning, the 31st, General Warren massed the three divisions of the 5th Corps for an attack upon the White Oak Road.

March 31, 1865. First day of the battle of Five Forks.

The attack was repulsed, and the Confederates followed up sharply in pursuit. So impetuous and sustained was this Southern counter-movement, that division after division was overthrown, till the entire 5th Corps was driven back on to the Boydton Road, where, being reinforced by some of the 2nd Corps, it rallied. We now come to the special part played by the Cavalry.

At the general advance in the morning, Sheridan's Cavalry had moved forward on the left of the 5th Corps, which, being now repulsed, and his right flank therefore left open, the successful Confederates immediately turned their attention to him.

First regaining the Five Forks' position,* and thence passing by roads well to the west, they came down on Smith's brigade of the 2nd Cavalry division, which, with Gregg's brigade on its right, was holding the passage over Stony Creek. This attack was made by the Confederates with Fitz-Hugh Lee's Cavalry, and two entire divisions of Infantry. It, however, failed to force the crossing. Earlier in the day, the four Northern Cavalry brigades under Merritt, taking advantage of the diversion created by the attack of the 5th Corps, had not only advanced to, but actually penetrated within, a portion of the outer works at Five Forks. Subsequently, on the repulse of the 5th

March 31. First day's battle of Five Forks.

* Map No. 2.

Corps, they had abandoned this advantage, and fallen back nearer to Dinwiddie. They still, however, formed a line facing north-west, of which Davies' Brigade of the 2nd Division held the left, the others continuing it towards the right.

March 31, 1865. First day of the battle of Five Forks.

After their ineffectual attempt to force the passage of Stony Creek, the Confederates succeeded in fording the Creek higher up, and coming down with the whole strength of their force on the flank of Davies' Cavalry brigade, overwhelmed and drove it back. A further advance drove the whole four brigades under Merritt back towards the east, thus completely cutting them off and isolating them from Sheridan's main body, which was now drawn up on the plain in front of and covering Dinwiddie Court-house.

Sheridan driven back to the neighbourhood of Dinwiddie.

Sheridan contrived, however, to convey a message to Merritt circuitously, ordering him to fall back; to regain the Boydton Plank Road, and thus, by making a detour, to rejoin him at the Court-house, and re-enter the line of battle from the rear.

Now mark the readiness Sheridan showed to take advantage of any good opportunity of charging *mounted.* It has often been groundlessly alleged against the Federal Horse that their training with firearms disinclined them for this more special function of Cavalry. As Merritt fell back gradually, in pursuance of the orders received from Sheridan, his left was retired while the right held its ground. (This means facing the Confederates.) This change of front, which may be called a 'quarter circle, left thrown back,' was immediately followed by a corresponding forward left wheel of the Confederates, who in so doing incautiously exposed the whole of their rear to Sheridan's line of four brigades drawn up in front of Dinwiddie.

Sheridan takes advantage of the Confederate rear becoming exposed to make a mounted charge.

No sooner did the happy chance present itself than it was seized. Sheridan ordered an immediate mounted

March 31, 1865. First day's battle of Five Forks.

charge. His despatch says: 'When their line' (its rear be it understood) 'was nearly parallel to mine, General Gibbs' Brigade of the 1st Division, and General Gregg's of the 2nd, were ordered to attack at once, while General Custer was ordered to bring up two Brigades of the 3rd Division in support. In this gallant attack made by Gibbs and Gregg, the enemy's wounded fell into our hands, and he was obliged to face by the rear rank' (an Americanism for 'facing about'), 'and give up his movement, which, if continued, would have taken in flank and rear the Infantry line of the Army of the Potomac.' (He means here the repulsed 5th Corps.)

He continues: 'When the enemy had faced to meet this attack, a very obstinate and handsomely contested battle ensued, in which, with all his Cavalry and two Divisions of Infantry, the enemy was unable to drive five brigades of our Cavalry *dismounted* from the open plain in front of Dinwiddie Court-house.

'The brunt of their Cavalry attack was borne by General Smith's Brigade, which had so gallantly held the crossing of Stony Creek in the morning. His command again held the enemy in check, with determined bravery.'

The peculiar mode of fighting of the Northern Cavalry.

HERE WE WOULD CALL ATTENTION TO ANOTHER PECULIARITY OF AMERICAN WAR, WHICH WE SHOULD DO WELL TO PONDER, AND TO GIVE OUR MEN BOTH THE INSTRUCTION AND THE NECESSARY TOOLS TO IMITATE ON OCCASION. 'As the enemy's two divisions of Infantry advanced to the attack, our Cavalry threw up some slight breastworks of rails at some points along our lines; and when the enemy attempted to force this position, they were handsomely repulsed and gave up the attempt for possession of the Court-house. It was after dark when the firing ceased; and the enemy lay on their arms that night not more than one hundred yards in front of our lines.'

Thus ended the first day's action of Five Forks.

Have our Cavalry the

Without one thought of disparagement to our splendid

Cavalry, who have no more sincere admirer than the writer, it is not too much to say that no British Cavalry that he has ever been associated with have either the arms, training, equipment, or instruction, to have enabled them, under similar circumstances, to play this part of independent and unsupported self-sufficing action at a distance from the other two arms.

training or means to play a similarly effective part in general action?

There is no British Cavalry officer of experience in war that reads this but will candidly admit that, under similar circumstances, commanding Cavalry whose carbines only carry 300, or with some rifles 600 yards, his men dressed in a manner wholly unfitting them to work on foot, braced and strapped down within an inch of their lives, encumbered with long spurs, and tripped up by jingling steel scabbards, he would first have fruitlessly attempted to keep back the advancing Infantry by mounted skirmishers, whose fire is about as effective as that of so many boys' popguns; then perhaps charged repeatedly, each time with great loss to his men; then, finally, consoling himself with the axiom that 'Cavalry are an offensive and not a defensive arm,' he would have come to the conclusion that that was no place for his troops opposed unsupported to all three arms, and after tremendous loss of life and horseflesh, all to no purpose, would have retired on the main body, leaving the disputed ground to the enemy, *and causing the whole three days' work by which it had been gained to be done over again at some future time.* A greater measure of credit is due to Sheridan when we recollect that it was his quick intelligence that first devised, at least on so large a scale, the novel mode of action he was now so successfully employing in the field; and that he was thus one of the earliest to set a practical example of the truth, THAT RIFLED BREECH-LOADING ARMS, INSTEAD OF RESTRICTING CAVALRY ACTION, OR DRIVING HORSEMEN OUT OF THE LINE OF BATTLE, AS SOME HAVE FORETOLD, ARE DESTINED UNDER AN IMPROVED AND

The subordinate and ineffective part our Cavalry would have been compelled to take under like circumstances.

March 31, 1865. First day's battle of Five Forks. Night.

MORE INTELLIGENT SYSTEM OF TRAINING AND TACTICAL ORGANISATION TO GIVE THEM IN THE FUTURE EVEN A WIDER FIELD AND SCOPE THAN THEY HAD IN THE PALMY CAVALRY DAYS OF THE GREAT FREDERICK.

To return to the field of Dinwiddie.

This effective organisation of the Northern Cavalry enables their Infantry to rally and resume the advance.

Meantime, under cover of the stout resistance of Sheridan's five dismounted brigades—which had required all the efforts of the whole Confederate force to be directed to the vain attempt to carry his position—the 5th Corps on his right rallied, was again led forward, and towards evening regained most of the ground it had lost, recapturing even a detached earthwork on the White Oak Road, from which the Confederates, who had driven it back, had originally sallied.

We see, therefore, that the Northern Cavalry—from its arms (mostly the Spencer 'repeating' rifle), its double Cavalry and Infantry training, and the peculiar mode of rapidly but effectively entrenching itself that it had been taught, and carried the implements to execute—was able not only to hold its own without yielding an inch of ground, but by its tenacity afforded a strong *appui*, behind and on the flank of which, as in a harbour of refuge, the whole infantry of Warren's corps was able to rally, to reform its shattered ranks, and finally successfully to resume a forward movement.

No European Horse, as at present organised, could have done this. Instance of the fruitless bravery of the Piedmontese at Montebello.

In a like case, the action of European Cavalry, which has no defensive fire, would have been retrograde—slower or faster according to the *morale* of the troops and the determination of their leader—*but certainly retrograde.* The best that they could have effected without rifle fire would have been to repeat the bootless, though brilliant, conduct, and to suffer the heavy loss, that marked the action of the intrepid Piedmontese Cavalry that so devotedly prevented Forey from being surprised by the Austrians, and covered the formation of his troops as they successively came on the field at Montebello in 1859, namely to charge

headlong time after time, at the cost of more than half their number, and be driven back after all. If our splendid costly Cavalry are kept up for no more effectual action, or mode of fighting less ruinously expensive of the lives of brave men and magnificent horses than *that*, the sooner that a little of the light of modern change breaks in upon the directors of their organisation, and alters their training for one more capable of producing results bearing some slight proportion to the expense of their maintenance, the better. Better both for the men and officers concerned, and for the military reputation of the nation whose defence may any day be committed to their worthy and gallant, but at present almost helpless and unavailing, keeping.

This example urgently calls for a similar reform of our Cavalry

In the instance under consideration, not only was *no ground lost*, but the defence of the Cavalry dismounted, using Spencer rifles, and sheltered from fire behind rails and slight earth-banks, *with their horses kept well under more solid cover farther to the rear*, was so effectual and stubborn as to cause severe loss to the two Confederate Infantry divisions who assaulted them across the open, and who, after suffering many heavy casualties, drew off at nightfall, thoroughly foiled. They themselves lost next to nothing.

The training and equipment of the Northern Horse enabled them to inflict severe loss, though suffering next to none themselves.

The 2nd Corps had advanced during and under cover of Sheridan's strenuous resistance, so that by nightfall on the 31st the whole Federal turning force had occupied a position much in advance of that of the morning, a result mainly due to the efficiency of its Cavalry rifle-fire.

Regarding this action, General Grant said in his final despatch, dated July 22, 1865—written when there had intervened plenty of time and opportunity for detraction and jealousy to strip off any colouring or exaggeration of its importance which Sheridan's own narrative might have given to it, and this, therefore, forms its highest and most thoroughly trustworthy praise: 'Here General Sheridan

displayed great generalship. Instead of retiring with his whole command' (he means when the repulse of the 5th Corps had thrown the entire weight of the Confederate attack upon the Cavalry) 'on the main army, to tell the tale of superior forces encountered, he **deployed his Cavalry on foot, leaving only mounted men enough to take care of the horses.* This compelled the enemy to deploy over a vast extent of ground, woods, and broken country, and made his progress slow.'

Grant's attempt to turn the Southern right had been defeated for that day; but all the Federal corps engaged had eventually held their ground, and, thanks to Sheridan's hard fighting, were in an advanced position, partly on their enemy's flank. This gave them great advantages for the following day, April 1, 1865, on which the fate of Richmond was to be virtually decided.

Operations during the night of March 31, and April 1, 1865.

After the Cavalry action of the 31st, Sheridan's headquarters were fixed at Dinwiddie Court-House. Here, during the night, he received direct from Grant himself a reply to his report despatched at dark, applauding highly his action of that day, and placing under his separate orders from that moment the whole of the 5th (Warren's) Corps. Without delay, on receiving intelligence of this additional force being entrusted to him, he arranged a plan which shows considerable skill and power of combination. Assuming that a great part of the Confederates were still but a short distance in his front, and calculating on the position on their flank and partially in their rear which his reports from the 5th Corps led him to suppose Warren now occupied, at 3 A.M. on April 1, he sent

Sheridan's plans for the morrow.

orders to that general (first describing himself as 'holding' on the road leading from Dinwiddie to Five Forks and three-quarters of a mile from the former),

* The italics are ours, not General Grant's.

directing him to attack their flank and rear at daylight, while he should distract their attention in front. He expressed a hope also that the Confederates might be drawn on to attack him himself, which, by bringing them on still further south, would lay their rear more completely open to Warren's assault. His orders to that officer concluded thus: 'Attack at daylight anyhow, and I will make an effort to get the road this side (west) of Adams' House; and if I do, you can capture the whole of them. Do not fear my leaving here. If the enemy remains, I shall fight at daylight.'

This concerted action, had it succeeded, must have been disastrous to the Southern cause, by putting the main body of their disposable force between two superior forces in the open, for Lee's long lines had been stripped of every available man for the defence of Five Forks. It failed, however, partly, it would seem, from slowness on the part of Warren, partly from the rapid retreat of the Southerners, who with the first daylight became aware of their perilous position.

During the rest of the night, in pursuance of the order given above, Ayre's division of the Fifth Corps moved down the Boydton Plank Road, and at daylight was getting on to the Five Forks Road, at two and a half miles north of Dinwiddie. **Night of March 31 to April 1.**

The other two divisions of the 5th Corps moved down the road by Dabney's House, coming into the Five Forks Road between 7 and 8 A.M. Meanwhile, the Cavalry advanced at daylight against the enemy, whom they found still close in their front, but who now gave way rapidly, retiring westward, and crossing Stony (or Chamberlain's) Creek. This hasty retreat was accelerated by the knowledge of Warren's three divisions being now moving to gain their left flank and rear. **April 1, 1865. Second day of the battle of Five Forks.** **The Confederates discover their danger, and retire rapidly.**

As they fell back the Confederates were closely followed by two Cavalry divisions, Deven's (1st) on the right,

April 1, 1865. Second day of the battle of Five Forks.

Custer's (3rd) on the left; Crook's (2nd) being held in reserve for the rest of that day. Balked in his plan for the enemy's capture by the slowness of his subordinate Warren, Sheridan had quickly to devise a fresh plan for carrying out Grant's wish of turning and forcing the Five Forks' position.

Sheridan's plan for the assault on Five Forks. How the peculiar organisation of the Federal Horse gave him extraordinary facilities.

It was rapidly formed, and places him in a high rank as a ready tactician. Especially does it bring out, in strong prominent relief, the confidence he had in the independent all-sufficient capacity of his Cavalry; his certainty that they could unite on occasion the speed of highly-trained horse, to the rapid destructive fire of Rifle Infantry; and his reliance on their ability, by rapid changes of position made *mounted*, to apply this fire, *dismounted*, *on the right spot, and at the right moment.* He was now pressing the Confederate retreat, with all nine of his brigades mounted, towards the west; the Confederates by their retrograde movement striving to evade the intended flank attack of the 5th Corps, at the same time that they made towards the shelter of their works at Five Forks. He now determined, however, to pass *round* them to the west with the Cavalry; to drive them back into their works; and then to attack them from the *west* with three brigades dismounted and acting in first line as Infantry; keeping two brigades in hand mounted, ready in the saddle to move at a moment's warning round to a flank, and attack there as opportunity might offer.

Sheridan resolves to make a feint on the Confederate *right*, to mask the *real* attack on their left.

A fourth Cavalry division, that of Mackenzie, from the army of the James, had now been placed under, and reported itself to, Sheridan. This fresh body of 1,000 horsemen he held in reserve near Dinwiddie, designing afterwards to employ them on the opposite flank, the extreme left, or east of the Confederate position, from which he was now about to draw off attention by threatening its right. His intention was to make a feint to turn the right of the works at Five Forks; meantime, while their atten-

tion was thus distracted, to move up the whole 5th Corps of Infantry and Mackenzie's Cavalry quickly on their left, and, in his own words, 'thus to crush the whole force, if possible, and drive *westwards* those that might escape; thus isolating them from their army at Petersburg.' It was well known that nearly all Lee's available force had been massed on his right at Five Forks; and those remaining in the Petersburg lines barely sufficed to man them.

April 1, 1865. Second day of the battle of Five Forks.

Hoping thereby to cut off the garrison of Five Forks from Lee's main army.

This happy conception was, in the end, skilfully and brilliantly executed.

The three brigades pushed forward under General Merritt, by several impetuous mounted charges drove the Confederate right first into and then, by dismounting, out of two outer lines of temporary works. By 2 P.M., the whole of the Southern force had retired into the main works on the White Oak Road. Then came the moment for more decisive action.

Execution of Sheridan's plan.

Sheridan sent Major Gillespie, of the Engineers, to Warren, to order his forward movement, and to be himself the guide. Warren put his troops in motion from his position, on the Gravelly Church Road, obliquely to, and at a short distance from, the White Oak Road, and about one mile south-easterly from Five Forks. He had two divisions in front line, one in reserve in column of regiments.

Merritt's Cavalry had been ordered to demonstrate, as though about to turn the Southern right; and directed that, so soon as the 5th Corps should assault their left, which he would know by the fire, they were to go in straight and attack the works in their own front. Sheridan now rode over himself, from the Cavalry to the 5th Corps. Finding it coming up but slowly, and fearing to lose the daylight, he made use of the authority which had been conditionally given him the previous night, and superseded General Warren, whom he replaced by

The Federals gradually close on the Five Forks' position from two opposite directions.

April 1, 1865. Second day of the battle of Five Forks.

Brigadier-General Griffin, the senior divisional commander.

An unforeseen mishap delays the attack.

But now occurred an unforeseen event which might have endangered the whole success of his plan. He found that, without any notice sent to him, the 2nd Corps, which it will be remembered was acting on the night of the 5th, had been wheeled forward on its right till it stood parallel to and fronting the Boydton Road; thus leaving a large interval unfilled between the two Corps, and laying Sheridan's right and rear completely open to any attack that might come down that road from Petersburg.

He immediately sent General Mackenzie's Cavalry up that road to feel for the enemy in that direction. It did actually find them approaching, and drove them back; and returning quickly, was still in time to rejoin Sheridan and take part in the grand final assault on Five Forks, in which it acted on the extreme right of the 5th Corps.

Attack on the Confederate left at Five Forks.

That Corps, under its new and more energetic commander, hurried up, now made a complete left wheel, and advancing rapidly along the White Oak Road 'burst like a tornado on the Southern flank and rear, at Five Forks.' 'Entering the outer works, the men pushed quickly on, orders having been previously given that, if the Confederate defences were forced, there should be no halting to reform broken lines. The Southerners were pressed back slowly to their main works, delivering meanwhile a most destructive fire. Becoming aware now of their dangerous position, they fought most stubbornly; and a deadly contest raged here for two hours.

The Northern Cavalry simultaneously attack the Confederate right.

At the sound of the 5th Corps' assault, Merritt's three brigades, dismounted, immediately attacked the works of the Confederate *right*, the opposite point to that on which the 5th Corps was now forcing an entrance. 'Being strongly entrenched here, and having a battery in position, the Confederates raked the dismounted Cavalry with a terrific fire. Several times the men, appalled by the

slaughter, staggered back from the entrenchments; but by turns they were urged, cheered, and driven on, until the enemy were surrounded on three sides, and completely exhausted. With their ranks reduced and wearied, and seeing it to be useless to try longer to check these desperate onsets, the Confederates, turning, now rushed to the rear, through the only outlet left to them. The resistance was over by 7.30 P.M. The dismounted Cavalry had swarmed over the works and entered them simultaneously with the 5th Corps, at many points.

The Southerners, overpowered, give way.

The Confederates were completely routed; the 5th Corps 'doubled up' their left flank in dire confusion, AND MERRITT'S MOUNTED RESERVE BRIGADES IMMEDIATELY SEIZING THE HAPPY MOMENT, DASHED FORWARD AT A GALLOP, PASSED THE WHITE OAK ROAD, 'AND, RIDING INTO THEIR BROKEN RANKS, SO DEMORALISED THEM THAT THEY MADE NO SERIOUS STAND, AFTER THEIR WORKS WERE CARRIED, BUT FLED IN DISORDER.' The Cavalry finally turned their own captured guns upon them in retreat.

Opportune pursuit of the Mounted Reserve Brigades of Cavalry.

Between five and six thousand prisoners fell into the hands of the Federals; and what *was almost of more importance, the fugitives were, by the quick action of the Cavalry, driven off westward, according to the original idea Sheridan had formed, and thus completely cut off from Petersburg.* Merritt's and Mackenzie's mounted brigades pursued them till dark, over a space of six miles. By this heavy stroke nearly 13,000 men out of Lee's feeble remnant of 42,000 were either killed, captured, or so driven westward as to be completely isolated from him, and no longer serviceable to his defence.

Heavy loss of the Confederates, and complete isolation of the remnant from Lee's main body.

Thus was the last stronghold that had so long protected and covered the South-side Railroad carried; and that last line of supply, that vital artery of such paramount importance to the defence of Richmond, lay open, defenceless, and bare to the Federal attack. It would be unfair, however, to suppress, in justice to the devoted

The last line of supply of the Richmond position falls into the Federals' hands.

bravery and soldiership of the South, that Sheridan's combined force in this action was not much less than 25,000 men; and that the strength with which the South opposed him did not exceed, if it amounted to, 15,000. The Federal loss was over 3,000; that of the South quite as great in killed and wounded, besides about 5,500 prisoners.

Over-whelming numerical superiority of the Federals.

PURSUIT OF LEE'S ARMY, TILL ITS SURRENDER AT APPOMATTOX COURT-HOUSE.

We now propose to follow the further Federal operations through the evacuation of the Richmond-Petersburg position, and the remarkable pursuit that ended in the surrender of Lee and the remainder of his gallant enduring army.

New Cavalry organisation conspicuously effective in the pursuit of Lee.

NOT LESS THAN IN THE ACTIONS OF MARCH 31 AND APRIL 1, WHICH TOGETHER CONSTITUTE THE DECISIVE BATTLE OF FIVE FORKS, DID THE PECULIAR ORGANISATION AND TRAINING OF SHERIDAN'S CAVALRY STAND THE NORTH IN GOOD STEAD DURING THE ARDUOUS AND WELL-SUSTAINED PURSUIT THAT NOW ENSUED.

Evening of April 1.

In order to co-operate with Sheridan, and to allow the South no respite or rallying-time after the heavy blow dealt at Five Forks, General Grant ordered a general cannonade all along his whole line of works. This opened in one grand crash at 10 P.M. on April 1. Those guns rang the knell of the defence of Richmond.

April 2, 1865.

At 4 A.M. on Sunday, April 2, a general assault along the entire line was made by the 2nd, 6th, 9th, 24th, and 25th Federal Army Corps, the whole under General Meade. The assailants pierced the works before them at several points. Part of the 9th Corps broke through on to the South-side Railroad, and began to tear it up. The 9th Corps also captured Fort Mahone, which covered the Jerusalem Plank Road; but as this position

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was of the utmost importance, the Confederates made a desperate counter-attack, which was only repulsed after the 6th Corps had come up on the left of the 9th to its assistance.

By 2 P.M. General Grant was able to telegraph to President Lincoln: 'Everything has been carried from the left of the 9th Corps. We are now closing around the works of the line immediately enveloping Petersburg.' At 8.30 p.m. a further report announced: 'I have now a continuous line of troops, and hope in a few hours to be entrenched, from the Appomattox below Petersburg, to the river above it. The whole captures, since the Army started (March 29) are not less than 12,000 men, and probably 50 guns—precise numbers not known.' **Sunday, April 2, 1865.**

The end was now fast drawing nigh. During the afternoon of April 2, Sunday, General Lee, finding his army no longer able to maintain its position, gave orders for the evacuation of Petersburg and Richmond. A Northern account says: 'This movement (the Confederate retreat) was rendered necessary and imperative by General Grant's (that is Sheridan's) successes on the left. At half-past 3 P.M. on Sunday, Mr. Jefferson Davis, the Southern President, received while in church at Richmond, a despatch from General Lee from Petersburg, to the effect that immediate preparations must be made to evacuate Richmond and its defences, as he was wholly unable to make further stand against the onset on the left (*his* right, at Five Forks.)' He added, that his design was to endeavour to reach, with the remains of his army, Danville, 140 miles south-west of Richmond, and there fortify for a last grand stand. Mr. Davis therefore himself started for Danville by rail at 8 o'clock that evening. The evacuation of its works by the army proceeded throughout the night of the 2nd.

On the afternoon of that day, Sheridan, anticipating that the Southern retreat was inevitable, was already

moving his Cavalry and the 5th Corps into positions favourable for intercepting it.

Lee's design in retreat was to push rapidly westerly with his whole remaining force, breaking all bridges behind him to delay the pursuit, and to make for Danville; or if intercepted on that line, to turn towards Lynchburg, by Farmville, in the neighbourhood of which place begins a region of hills that would much facilitate his retreat and afford many excellent positions for delaying his pursuers. He marched therefore first for Amelia Court-House. He calculated, moreover, as in effect turned out to be the case, that Grant, uncertain which line of several he would take, must necessarily divide his vastly superior force into several corps for the pursuit, and that this division might yet give the Confederates the chance of falling on some of these bodies in detail.

April 3, 1865.

On the morning of the 3rd, when the actual commencement of the Confederate retreat and its probable general direction became known, Sheridan at once started in pursuit.

Confederates retreat towards Danville.

The Federal Cavalry lead the pursuit.

It was afterwards estimated that Lee had about 25,000 men with him at the time he left Richmond. during the night of April 2–3. At daybreak on the 3rd, General Merritt moved the Cavalry in pursuit first along the 'River Road' towards the Namozine Creek. He found the Southern rear-guard entrenched at the crossing, and the bridge destroyed. He immediately forded the stream, and brought a section of artillery to bear on the enemy's flank, who then retired, leaving the road strewn with all the *débris* of an army in hasty retreat. The Cavalry were followed closely by the 5th Corps under Sheridan himself.

The pursuit was kept up for twenty miles further that day; the Southern rear-guard, overtaken again beyond the Namozine Creek, lost 300 prisoners, 4 guns, 2 colours, and several waggons. Night stopped the pursuit. The

Cavalry resumed the chase at daybreak with all nine of its brigades. The Confederates were not again overtaken till the afternoon, when their rear-guard was found near Bethany strongly posted with numerous Artillery and Infantry behind works. Not much impression was consequently made before dark. Soon after 11 P.M., however, Sheridan, himself with the 5th Corps, who had his scouts out in every direction, having obtained fresh intelligence of the Confederate movements, sent on orders that roused up the Cavalry to continue their march. They were now directed on Jettersville,* thus making a wide circuit westerly. After marching all night, they reached that place about 6 A.M. on the 5th, and found here their 5th Corps, which had preceded them (by a shorter line), strongly entrenched across and barring the railway from Richmond to Danville, facing of course to north-east. April 4, 1865.

It will be necessary here to retrace the movements of the 5th Corps. It had started in pursuit on the 3rd soon after the Cavalry, and under Sheridan's personal command had taken a line *nearer* to Richmond than that followed by the Cavalry, which as the more swiftly-moving body had been sent on a wider circle to endeavour to *head* the enemy, and if possible turn them back towards the Infantry. The 5th Corps had arrived in sight of the Appomattox river about 2 P.M. on the 3rd, marching through Ford's and Sutherland's stations.† It then turned short to the left without crossing the river, and moved along the Namozine road on the traces of the retreating Confederates, crossing both the Namozine and Deep Creeks. March of Sheridan with the 5th Corps in pursuit.

Next day, the 4th, it moved 20 miles to Jettersville, arriving at 5 P.M. Here Sheridan received intelligence that left no doubt that Lee with his whole army was at

* See Map No. 1. † Ibid.

April 4, 1865.

Amelia Court-House, seven miles nearer to Richmond than the point he had now reached.

LEE HAD THUS BEEN HEADED; THE PURSUERS HAD GOT BETWEEN HIM AND DANVILLE, AND THE OBJECT OF PUSHING WESTWARD HAD THUS BEEN ATTAINED. Sheridan immediately sent this news both to general Grant and to the Cavalry behind him.

Critical position of Sheridan in presence of Lee's whole army.

He now found himself with some 12,000 men almost in presence of the bulk of Lee's army; whose first object manifestly should have been, if other considerations had not detained him, to come down on Sheridan with all his weight, overwhelm him, and open the path for his retreat to Danville. Sheridan's report says, 'the 5th Corps was immediately ordered to entrench itself across the railway with a view of holding Jettersville till the main army (Grant's) should arrive. It seems to me that this was the only chance the Army of Northern Virginia had to save itself, which might have been done had General Lee promptly attacked and driven back the small force opposed to him and pursued his march to Burkesville Junction.'

It is but strict justice to the reputation of Lee's splendid strategy—which had carried him victorious through twenty pitched battles against vast numerical odds—to insert here a few words, from a Southern account of the war, 'The Lost Cause,' by Pollard, which fully explain this otherwise unaccountable delay on the Confederate part. He says: 'The retreating army reached Amelia Court-House in the morning of the 4th. But a terrible disappointment awaited it there. Several days before, General Lee had despatched most distinct and urgent orders that large supplies of commissary and quartermaster's stores should be sent forward from Danville to Amelia Court-House. But the authorities in Richmond bungled the command; and the train of cars loaded with these supplies ran through to relieve the evacuation of the

capital, *without unloading the stores at Amelia Court-House.* General Lee found there not a single ration for his army. It was a terrible revelation. To keep life in his army he would have to break half of it up into foraging parties to get food; the country was scant of subsistence—a tract of straggling woods and pine barrens—and soon the pangs of hunger would tell upon the flagging spirits of the men, and consume the last hope. Meanwhile, the forced delay of his army at Amelia Court-House gave Sheridan, with his Cavalry and the 5th Corps, time to strike in upon the Confederate line of retreat.' Thus passed the night of April 4. On the morning of the 5th, Davies' Brigade of Crook's Cavalry Division, which was with Sheridan, was sent out north-westerly on a reconnaissance towards Fame's cross-roads to discover if any attempt was being made to retreat in that direction. It came upon the Southern Cavalry near that place and captured many prisoners, five new Armstrong guns, and about 200 waggons, mostly empty, which were doubtless on their way to Lynchburg for supplies.

April 4, 1865.

Cavalry skirmish near Fame's cross-roads.

It was, as has been shown above, the expectation of receiving supplies which caused Lee's delay in the dangerous position of Amelia Court-House.

In this skirmish was now intercepted an order addressed to General Lee's commissaries at Danville and at Lynchburg, ordering 200,000 rations to be sent to Burkesville. Burkesville is the junction of the Richmond and Danville Railroad with the South-side rail from Petersburg, and is 52 miles from that city. Sheridan immediately forwarded this letter, about 3 P.M., to General Grant, adding, 'The 2nd Army Corps is now coming up. I wish you were here yourself. I feel confident of capturing the Army of Northern Virginia if we exert ourselves. I will send out all my Cavalry now on the left flank (further to block Lee's retreat), except Mackenzie who is on the right.' The Cavalry thus sent

April 5, 1865.

April 5, 1865.

out was met with but slight skirmishing, whose direction, however, plainly indicated where the chief force of the Confederates lay.

Route of the remaining Federal Corps in pursuit.

Meanwhile, the rest of the Army of the Potomac was fast following on Lee's traces and drawing near to aid Sheridan's advanced troops. Let us retrace their movements a little. On April 4, the 6th and 9th Corps, together with two divisions of the 24th and 25th Corps, with which force was General Grant himself, marched from Sutherland's Station along the Cox Road westerly.* Separating shortly from the 6th and 9th Corps, Grant with the divisions of the 24th and 25th Corps, moved direct for Burkesville, HIS OBJECT BEING, OF COURSE, SO TO DIVIDE HIS FORCE AND THROW NUMEROUS FEELERS OUT WESTERLY, THAT WHICHEVER WAY LEE'S ARMY TURNED HE SHOULD FIND HIMSELF CONFRONTED BY SOME ONE COLUMN IN STRENGTH. This force advanced along the railroad, and halted for the night of the 4th at Wilson's station. †

The next day it moved still along the railroad to Blacks and Whites, reaching that place at 2 P.M. Thence it pressed forward over good roads to Nottaway Court-House.

Here, about 6 P.M., General Grant received Sheridan's despatch of 3 P.M. that day, spoken of above, informing him of Lee's situation. He immediately sent the divisions of the 24th Corps to Burkesville, while he himself rode at once to Jettersville to assume charge of the further movements of the whole pursuing army.

We will follow him there shortly; but must first work back a little as to time, to bring up the thread of Sheridan's doings to the time of Grant's arrival in person at the dangerous position he was now holding in order to intercept Lee.

On the night of the 5th, after the skirmish with the

* See Map No. 1. † Ibid.

Confederate Cavalry, the Northern pursuing force lay in line of battle facing north-east, and entrenched. The 2nd Corps was on the left of the Infantry, the 5th in the centre, the 6th on the right. Mackenzie's and Custer's Cavalry covered the two flanks. At daylight on the 6th, General Meade, who commanded the whole, under Grant, moved the three Corps along the railroad towards Amelia Court-House to attack Lee, who had remained inactive during the night. April 5, 1865.

April 6, 1865. Lee's army abandons the retreat for Danville, and turns north-west for Lynchburg.

The Confederates had, however, now given up the idea of retreating to Danville, and had, some time before daylight, turned off west for Farmville, aiming for the road to Lynchburg. Meade, on discovering this, changed the direction of the head of the column, composed of the 2nd and 5th Corps, north-westerly, and marched for Deatonsville. The 6th Corps, after this change of direction, formed a separate column farther westerly and a little ahead of the other. It itself was, however, preceded and led by the entire Cavalry.

Sheridan, having been relieved by Meade of the Infantry corps he had commanded since March 31, now reverted to his old charge of the Cavalry, and his personal presence with it henceforth was perhaps mainly instrumental in its successful share in the great events which were now hourly impending. IN PURSUANCE OF HIS OLD IDEA OF FIRST GETTING AHEAD OF THE RETREATING ENEMY, AND THEN FIGHTING TO DELAY THEM, HE PUSHED ON RAPIDLY MORE WESTERLY THAN THE INFANTRY.

Action at Sailor's Creek.

When near Deatonsville, at Sailor's Creek, he overtook the Confederate trains (waggons) moving in the direction of Farmville, escorted by heavy masses of Infantry and Cavalry, and it soon became evident that he had before him a very strong rear-guard of Lee's army attempting to cover and make good the retreat of the main body. This force (probably at first 10,000 men) was too strong for him to check by confronting it; but he hit upon an

April 6, 1865. Action at Sailor's. Creek.

ingenious device for *delaying it* with the Cavalry, which, under the circumstance of the rest of Grant's army drawing every moment nearer, equally answered the purpose.

Peculiarly effective *detaining* action of the Mounted Rifle Cavalry.

Crook's Division was at once ordered to attack the flank of the trains and the escorting column; and if the enemy was too strong, one of his brigades was to pass on at once *in rear* of his line (while the line dismounted, held fast and pressed the enemy with their fire), and attack at a point farther on. Each division doing this in alternate succession, delayed the enemy; and this constant searching fire discovered his weak points.

Passing on successively in this manner, Crook's, Custer's and Deven's divisions CROSSED OVER, FROM NORTH-EAST TO THE SOUTH AND WEST OF SAILOR'S CREEK BEFORE THE CONFEDERATES COULD REACH THE STREAM; AND GETTING ON THE HIGH GROUND ON THE FARTHER BANK THEY TOOK POST, FORMED UP, FACED ABOUT AND FRONTED THEIR ENEMY, THUS DISPUTING HIS PASSAGE. They thus captured 16 guns, 400 waggons, and many prisoners, and by aid of their strong commanding position and superior 'repeating' rifle fire, *actually intercepted and turned off their line of retreat, so that they were delayed, until eventually captured, three whole divisions of Infantry.*

One brigade of Sheridan's Cavalry presses the Confederate *rear*, while three divisions detain its *front*.

While three of Sheridan's Cavalry divisions enumerated above thus passed completely *ahead* of the Confederates and barred the farther progress of their more swiftly moving Cavalry and Infantry, by fire from the high bank on the south-west of the Creek, Stagg's Michigan Brigade of the Cavalry, armed with the Spencer rifle, and a half battery, was employed at a point about two and a half miles south of Deatonsville, but on the north and east side of the creek, in shelling the slow-going 'trains' and their escort. They thus served to keep a large portion of the Confederates engaged in defence of their proper rear, and prevented them from moving to the aid of the rest of their comrades, engaged in trying to clear their way through the

obstructing Cavalry in front. The body with which Sheridan was now engaged—both on its front, flanks, and rear, having in some degree, in fact, surrounded it with his twelve brigades—turned out afterwards to be the rearguard of Lee's army, under General Ewell. It must have been about 8,000 strong, and, of course, composed of his steadiest and most reliable troops, for to such alone, under these circumstances, would the perilous and most important duty of rearguard be entrusted. THE MODE IN WHICH SHERIDAN, FROM THE SPECIAL ARMING AND TRAINING OF HIS CAVALRY, WAS ABLE TO DEAL WITH THIS REARGUARD, FIRST TO OVERTAKE IT IN RETREAT, THEN TO PASS COMPLETELY *BEYOND* IT, TO TURN, FACE IT, AND TAKE UP AT LEISURE A POSITION STRONG ENOUGH TO ENABLE HIM TO DETAIN IT, IN SPITE OF ITS NATURALLY FIERCE AND DETERMINED EFFORTS TO BREAK THROUGH, IS HIGHLY CHARACTERISTIC OF THE SELF-RELIANT, ALL-SUFFICING EFFICIENCY TO WHICH AT THIS TIME THE NORTHERN HORSEMEN HAD BEEN BROUGHT. The practical experience of nearly four years of continual war, the entire and untrammelled confidence placed in good men amongst the Northern leaders, when they proved themselves to be so, and the complete freedom left them of devising and executing the improvements their daily experience suggested, had enabled Sheridan and one or two more of similar bent of mind to shake themselves free of the unsound traditions of European Cavalry theory, and to make their own Horse not the jingling, brilliant, costly, but almost helpless unreality it is with us, BUT A FORCE THAT WAS ABLE, ON ALL GROUNDS, IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES, TO ACT FREELY AND EFFICIENTLY, WITHOUT ANY SUPPORT FROM INFANTRY.

April 6, 1865. Action at Sailor's Creek.

Not only is there no European Cavalry with which the writer is acquainted that could have acted the part now played by the force under Sheridan, but there is not on record, that he is aware of, an instance in the eventful wars of the last or the present century in Europe of

April 6, 1865. Action at Sailor's Creek.

a strong rear-guard having been thus effectually dealt with.

A little before this, Sheridan had been informed by letter from General Grant that the 6th Army Corps—which had been formerly under him in the Shenandoah Valley, and which our narrative left a few hours back marching on Lee's traces, the westernmost, and consequently now the nearest to Sheridan, of Meade's two columns (see page 95)—had been again assigned to him, and was fast coming up to aid him. Pending their arrival—one can imagine how anxiously it was looked for by the Cavalry, when every passing moment was vital to the fate of Lee's rear-guard which they were detaining—his report says: 'I felt so strongly the necessity of holding back this large force of the enemy that I gave permission to General Merritt to order Colonel Stagg's brigade to make a mounted charge* against their 'lines' (hastily run up rail fences only), which was most gallantly done, the men leaving many of their horses dead almost up to the enemy's works.' The 6th Corps now arrived. The Confederates immediately began to push on their retreat faster. Up to this time they had been engaged as a trusty rear-guard in providing for the safety of Lee's main body; now they began to fight for their own escape. They had, in fact, been so harassed by the incessant attacks and deadly rifle fire on their rear and flanks as to be obliged, heretofore, to suspend for the time their retreat, and to devote all their efforts to holding their own and to attempt to bring off their waggons. Every moment was as an hour to them, for they knew that every ten minutes might bring up fresh troops to block their retreat. Now, on the arrival of the 6th Corps, they were compelled to turn their more serious attention to the object of escape.

The 6th Federal Army Corps (Infantry) arrives on the field.

* Mark well, that in the American practice this was looked upon as an extreme measure, only to be resorted to when great and commensurate results were to be gained; not, as with us, the daily and hourly, in fact the only recognised mode of action, of Cavalry.

Seymour's division of the 6th Corps immediately attacked the 'lines' (rail-fences) on which Stagg's mounted charge had been made, and carried them at once. He then continued to press, skirmishing, upon the enemy's rear, who were now in full retreat. All this time it must be recollected that the 6th Corps and Stagg's Cavalry Brigade had not yet reached Sailor's Creek, towards the passage over which they were now driving the Southerners, and approaching it from the north-east; while, on the contrary the three divisions of Federal Cavalry that had crossed the Creek earlier in the day, and were now posted on the further bank, were still holding back the Confederates from that side, from the south-west. The Southern rearguard was now, therefore, completely between two fires—the rapid fire of breech-loading and of repeating rifles, be it remembered—and was suffering accordingly. Their only hope of escape now lay in breaking through the three divisions of detaining Cavalry before the 6th Corps were too close upon them.

April 6, 1865. Action at Sailor's Creek.

The Confederate rearguard is enclosed between two fires.

HAD IT BEEN ANY EUROPEAN CAVALRY, UNARMED WITH 'REPEATERS,' AND UNTRAINED TO FIGHT ON FOOT, THAT WAS BARRING THE WAY,—ANY CAVALRY WHOSE ONLY MEANS OF DETENTION CONSISTED IN THE ABSURD INEFFECTUAL FIRE OF MOUNTED SKIRMISHERS, OR IN REPEATED CHARGES WITH LANCE OR SABRE,—THE CONFEDERATE GAME WOULD HAVE BEEN SIMPLE AND EASY ENOUGH.

They would merely have had to form battalion or brigade squares with their baggage in the midst; to have placed these squares in echellon so as to support each other; and then, advancing, to have steadily *shot* their way through the opposing horse. Who does not recollect Napier's celebrated account of the two squares, one composed of the 5th and 77th British Regiments, the other of the 21st Portuguese, at El Bodon, breaking their way out, 'issuing unscathed, like the holy men from the Assyrian furnace,' through the surrounding

April 6, 1865. Action at Sailor's Creek.

clouds of Montbrun's splendid and eager French cuirassiers? What reader of military history but will at once recall the instance of the safe retreat of the English infantry for three miles over the open plain at Fuentes d'Onor, leaving 500 of these same chosen horsemen, who had vainly essayed to bar their progress, stretched prostrate on the field?—or the similarly successful retreat of the Russian squares at Craône and at Rheims in 1814? The Confederate rearguard, now under the veteran Ewell, were men who had shown themselves, in a hundred tried fields from Bull Run downwards, to be soldiers fully capable of appreciating and following these well-known and brilliant precedents, had but their circumstances been similar. *But not the men, but the times and the means were completely changed.* The 'mounted rifle' plan of fighting on foot from behind cover made the detaining fire of the Federal Cavalry as galling and effectual as that of the best Infantry; while by their method of the alternate passing on of mounted bodies in rear of their dismounted skirmishers—these mounted bodies again dismounting in selected positions further on in their turn—THEY WERE ENABLED TO PRESENT TO THE CONFEDERATES AN IMPENETRABLE HEDGE, CONSTANTLY FALLING BACK, AND THUS AVOIDING ACTUAL CONTACT, BUT UNBROKEN, CONTINUOUS, SHELTERED BY OBSTACLES OF GROUND, AND CONSTANTLY EMITTING IN THEIR FACES A FIRE MOST DEADLY IN ITS PRECISION AND SUSTAINED RAPIDITY. THEY WERE THUS ENABLED ALWAYS TO KEEP AHEAD, AND ALWAYS TO PRESENT AN IMPASSABLE BARRIER TO FURTHER RETREAT, WHILE THEY THEMSELVES, FROM BEING COMPLETELY COVERED, AVOIDED ANY SERIOUS LOSS. The Confederates could not form square against them; because on this formation their 'repeating' fire would have told with tenfold effect.

The resistance of the Confederate Infantry now became more stubborn in proportion as they felt that the closer they were pressed from two opposite sides, the more imminent did their destruction or capture become.

Sheridan now pushed on Wheaton's division of the sixth corps to reinforce Seymour's.

April 6, 1865. Action at Sailor's Creek.

He says: 'I felt confident that we could break up the enemy. It was apparent from the absence of artillery fire' (their guns had pushed on earlier in the day across the creek, and sixteen of them had been captured, as will be recollected, in the passage of the stream) 'and the manner in which they gave way when pressed, that the force of the enemy opposed to us was a heavy rear-guard. He was driven on till our lines' (of the two Infantry Corps) 'nearly reached Sailor's Creek; and from the north' (east bank of the stream) 'I could see our Cavalry' (that is, Merritt's, Custer's, and Deven's) 'on the high ground above the creek and south' (west) 'of it, and the long line of smoke from the burning waggons. A Cavalryman' (Americanism for dragoon) 'who in a charge cleared the enemy's works and came through their lines (from Custer's side), reported to me what was going on in front. As soon as General Wright (commanding 6th Corps) could get his Artillery into position, I ordered Stagg's Brigade of Cavalry to strike the flank and extreme right' (that is, the southern extremity of their line as they faced Sheridan) 'of the enemy's lines.' Sheridan attacked at the same time with the Infantry of the 6th Corps. 'The attack of Seymour's and Wheaton's divisions was splendid. The Cavalry in rear (Custer's and Deven's) attacked simultaneously; and the enemy after a gallant resistance were completely surrounded. Nearly all threw down their arms and surrendered. General Ewell, commanding, and a number of other General Officers, together with a very large number of prisoners,* fell into our hands. Most of

The Federals attack this rearguard closely, at once in front and rear.

* General Grant's despatch of July 1865 says, 'between 6,000, and 7,000 prisoners.' A Southern account, on the other hand, makes their strength:—

Ewell's Corps	4,200
Pickett's Division	800
Total	5,000

The reader must judge for himself between the two.

them fell into the hands of the Cavalry; but they are no more entitled to claim them than the 6th Corps, to which equal credit is due for the good results of this engagement.'

Reflections upon the action at Sailor's Creek.

In reviewing the remarkable results obtained by this novel application of an old principle, that of the Dragoon proper, as he existed in the wars of the 17th century, it is but fair to the Confederates to state that this signal disaster to them—the capture of an entire rearguard—which not only did not save itself in spite of its energetic action, but also led by its loss to the ultimate surrender of the main army under Lee—was caused, most probably, as follows: First, there was an immense disparity in the numbers on each side. The Federals probably had latterly 14,000 Infantry and 10,000 Cavalry engaged. The Confederates had not more than 8,000 to 10,000 in action at first, and latterly not 5,000.

Moreover, this desperate remnant of the once proud and numerous Armies of the South fought under the immense disadvantage of not having received any regular issue of provisions since the 3rd of the month; so that the men were nearly famished with hunger, and half dead with fatigue, in addition to having to contend against the weight of double numbers, and the incalculable advantage which the Federal breech-loaders gave them against the indifferent muzzle-loaders, with which the great bulk of the Confederates were armed.

Secondly, it was only recently, and almost entirely under Sheridan's personal superintendence and training, that the Federal Cavalry had attained the formidable power arising from their double organisation and possession of all the strong points of both horse and foot. Their practice in the field in this respect, *of dismounted action*, on so effective a scale at least, was not generally known to the Confederates. Sheridan had but recently, it will be recollected, been withdrawn from the Shenandoah

Valley: a field so comparatively distant as to make his special tactics unknown to the great majority of the defenders of Richmond. PROBABLY, THEREFORE, THE SOUTHERN REARGUARD UNDER EWELL, WHEN FIRST THEY FOUND THEMSELVES INTERCEPTED BY APPARENTLY CAVALRY ALONE, PAID NOT MUCH ATTENTION TO THEM; CONSIDERING THAT THEY COULD ALWAYS SHOOT AND BREAK THEIR WAY THROUGH THEM, and, therefore, giving their more serious efforts to keeping back the *pursuers*, (the 6th Army Corps and Stagg's brigade) so as to give their main Army, under Lee, time to escape. In this praiseworthy and devoted adherence to the object for which they had been chosen as rearguard, they either overlooked or underrated the tremendous power that this new method of fighting in a double capacity had given to the Northern Horse behind them. Thus, finally, when the arrival of three divisions of Infantry and guns made it necessary that they should retire in right earnest, *it was too late for escape*. THEY FOUND TO THEIR COST THAT EIGHT BRIGADES OF MOUNTED RIFLEMEN, SAY 7,500 MEN, WERE QUITE CAPABLE, NOT ONLY OF HARASSING THEM, BUT OF ENTIRELY BARRING THEIR PASSAGE, AND ENSURING THEIR ENTIRE CAPTURE OR DISPERSION. AND SO IT PROVED: APPARENTLY BUT FEW, IF ANY, OF THE MEN THAT FORMED EWELL'S FORCE ESCAPED TO REJOIN LEE.* The whole Federal Cavalry and the 6th Corps encamped on the south and west bank

April 6, 1865. Nightfall.

* It should not be overlooked, for in it consists the whole merit of the method of fighting which we are advocating, that the Federal force that at first overtook Lee's rearguard was composed *solely* of Cavalry, and that it was entirely by means of the efficiency of their *fire*—because, in fact, they were Mounted Riflemen—that they were able to detain this strong rearguard till their own Infantry, of the 6th Corps, came up—many hours after. Any ordinary European Cavalry could thus have overtaken a rearguard: none but troops armed and trained as Mounted Riflemen could thus have 'held' it. All the instances we have quoted in the text—El Bodon, Fuentes D'Onor, Craône, Rheims—out of dozens that might be given, show that a sabre or lance Cavalry, however brave and well led, might have *attempted* it, but would have paid for their temerity with fearful loss, and failed after all. Sheridan's force, on the contrary, suffered very inconsiderably.

of Sailor's Creek that night, after following the very small escaped remnant of the enemy for some miles.

On the 7th, at dawn, the pursuit was renewed. But it now took two different directions in order to search for the Confederate main body, as it was quite uncertain which way Lee had retired during the fighting of the previous day.

April 7, 1865.

There had arisen a supposition that the main bulk of his army had retired towards Danville, and had met the divisions of the 24th and 25th Corps southerly, near Prince Edward's Court-House. Sheridan, therefore, sent General Merritt, with his two Cavalry divisions, to the last-named place; and after General Crook, with one Cavalry division, and part of the 2nd Army Corps (which had now come up), had started to continue the direct search towards Lynchburg, Sheridan himself joined Merritt. This was soon found to be a false alarm. At Prince Edward's Court-house Sheridan met General Mackenzie's Cavalry (of the Army of the James); and learning certainly that no attempt at escape had been made in this direction, he sent Merritt, Custer, Deven, and Mackenzie to retrace their steps, take up again the direct line of pursuit dropped during this digression, and to push on for Prospect Station on the Lynchburg line. Meanwhile, Crook's Cavalry division had encountered the Confederate main body near Farmville, and, whether, from their weak numbers, from bad handling, or from too great elation and rashness after their success of the previous day, they ventured too far, were repulsed, and lost General Gregg, and several hundred men taken. This happened at Highbridge on the Appomattox. The Confederates, under Lee himself, here succeeded in crossing to the north or left bank of the river, and burnt the bridge behind them. This news soon reached Sheridan, now on his return from Prince Edward's Court-House to resume the direct line of pursuit. He immediately sent on an order to General

The direct pursuit of Lee resumed.

Crook to cross to the left bank of the Appomattox, following the Confederates, and then pushing westerly, to endeavour to get to Prospect Station before them.

The whole day of the 7th had, however, been lost by this digression southerly on false information. The Confederate retreat was now being pressed straight for Lynchburg. During the 7th, General Grant addressed a letter to General Lee, briefly setting forth their relative position, and 'the hopelessness of further resistance,' and urging the surrender of the Southern Army, to save 'the further effusion of blood.' An answer was received, which, without entering upon the question of surrender, enquired what terms would be granted. This might have been expected to fulfil the double object of gaining more time for escape, or paving the way to future negotiation. But the pursuit was not relaxed for a moment. At every step the Federals picked up stragglers, and military stores partially, because hastily, destroyed. On the morning of the 8th, Merritt's Cavalry* continued the march to Prospect Station; and here, meeting Crook who had arrived the previous night, all pushed on together for Appomattox depôt (railway station), a point on the Lynchburg rail four miles south of Appomattox Court-House.

Correspondence between Grant and Lee.

Shortly after marching off this morning, Sheridan heard from scouts that four trains of railway cars were at Appomattox Station, loaded with supplies for General Lee.

April 8, 1865. The pursuit.

The nearness of this prize was at once communicated to Merritt, and the whole Cavalry hurried on briskly for twenty-eight miles to get possession of it before Lee could.

'General Custer had the advance, and on nearing the station skilfully threw a mounted force round the trains,

* As below:

Custer	3
Deven	3
Mackenzie	3
Total	9 brigades.

and captured them.' Without halting, he turned at once northward, and made for the Court-House, PUSHING BACK BEFORE HIM THE ADVANCED GUARD OF THE ENEMY WHO HAD REACHED APPOMATTOX STATION SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH HIM; and as he drove them back in that direction, that is, back on their main body, he captured many prisoners, twenty-five pieces of artillery, a hospital train, and a large park of waggons.

The Federal Cavalry again succeed in getting ahead of Lee's army. April 8, 1865.

It is probable, from the encumbrances that were with it, that this part of Lee's Army which the Cavalry now struck upon was not the fighting head of a regular advanced guard, but either the flank of the main column, or a large detachment coming to the Station for fresh supplies, and to get rid of their wounded. THUS SHERIDAN'S ENERGETIC AND WELL-DIRECTED PURSUIT HAD AGAIN GOT WESTWARD OF THE CONFEDERATES, AND INTERPOSED BETWEEN THEM AND THEIR OBJECT. General Deven came up and strengthened Custer's right soon after.

Sheridan falls in with Lee's main army.

THE CLOSING ACT OF THE GREAT DRAMA OF THE WAR WAS NOW VERY NEAR AT HAND.

Lee's advanced guard is intercepted, turned off its line of march, and forced back round Appomattox Court-House.

Lee's main body had been headed on its road to Lynchburg, and a part of it was now turned off that direct line of retreat, and forced back upon Appomattox Court-House. From this time until dark the Federal Cavalry continued to fight on the same plan of 'holding' and detention, that had been so effective at Sailor's Creek; and at nightfall all the Confederate troops in sight had been driven back, and forced to concentrate around the Court-House. Sheridan, who was upon the spot directing in person, now sent word to Grant that now in very deed 'the Army of Northern Virginia had reached their last ditch.'

Hurried messengers from him to the detachments under General Ord, and to the 5th Corps, both in his rear southerly, begged them to push on with all speed, as, if they did so rapidly, 'there was no escape for the enemy.' His report continues: 'During this night, though we knew

that the whole remnant of Lee's Army was in our front, we held fast with the Cavalry' (*alone*, be it remarked) 'to what we had gained; and ran the captured trains back along the rail to a point where they could be protected by our Infantry that was coming up.'

April 8, 1865. Night.

The divisions of the 24th and 25th Corps, and the whole of the 5th Corps, guided straight to their point by these reports from Sheridan, thus saved from unnecessary *détours*, and marching rapidly and steadily all night, reached Appomattox Station about daylight on the 9th. They were now approaching, of course, from that side where their advance was sheltered by the lines of their Cavalry, who were four miles further north than the station, watching and keeping in the Confederates around the Court-House.

April 9. 1865. Fight at Appomatox Court-House. The Federal Infantry reach the field at daybreak.

Thus began a day destined to be for ever memorable in the annals of war.

April 9, 1865. Early morning.

General Ord appears to have commanded all the approaching Federal Infantry. Warned of his being near at hand, Sheridan now rode back to meet him near the station. Their plans of mutual co-operation were soon settled, and Sheridan galloped back to his own command in the advance. He arrived just in time to order the final movements of this momentous day. Lee had apparently now discovered by how weak a force he had been detained and coerced all night; or, perhaps, as is more probable, he himself only now reached the field and learnt how his subordinates had been hitherto cajoled and delayed. The Southern Army, therefore, now made a desperate attempt to break through its detainers, and to pursue its way towards Lynchburg. *But the effort came too late.* 'Just as the enemy, in heavy force, was attacking, with the intention of breaking through our lines, I' (Sheridan) 'directed the Cavalry, *which was dismounted*, to fall back gradually, resisting so as to give time for our Infantry to form its lines and march to the front, and,

Lee's army makes a last effort to break through.

when this was done, to move rapidly off to the right flank and mount. This was skilfully carried out.' The Cavalry having fully effected its object as a detention and a mask, drew off to the flank, and 'the enemy discontinued his attack as soon as he caught sight of our Infantry.'

Sheridan, indefatigable, now took measures, if it had not been completely done already, to give the final finishing-stroke to the Confederates, by playing, with the whole of the Cavalry, the same part relatively to Ord's Infantry that Merritt had so effectually performed for the attacking 6th Corps at Sailor's Creek, viz. to pass rapidly, *mounted*, round *behind* the Confederates, and to place them between two fires. He says: 'I moved briskly round the left (east) of the enemy's line of battle, which was falling back rapidly, heavily pressed by the advance of our Infantry, and was about to charge the flank and rear of the trains and the confused masses of the enemy, when a white flag was presented to General Custer, who had the advance, and who sent me the information at once that the enemy desired to surrender.' The assault was immediately stopped. The end had come at last. This was to be the final stroke almost of four years of warfare such as the world has seldom seen. Generals Gordon and Wilcox of the Confederates, deputed to do so, met Sheridan at Appomattox Court-House, and requested a suspension of hostilities, pending negotiations which, they stated, were in progress between Lee and Grant, for the surrender of the Southern Army. Sheridan replied that he warmly desired to prevent unnecessary bloodshed, but that, as nothing definite had been settled yet, and 'an attack had just been made on his lines with the view to escape, under the impression that his force was only Cavalry,' he must have some certain assurance before suspending his attack.

April 9, 1865.

General Gordon replied that there was no doubt of the intended surrender of Lee's army. On this, Sheridan

Suspension of hostilities till

agreed to order the cessation of operations, and to meet the Confederate deputies again in half an hour's time at the Appomattox Court-House.

General Grant's arrival.

This was done. At the second meeting, Generals Longstreet and Gordon represented the South, and it was decided that hostilities should cease till the expected arrival of General Grant.

Later in the day, a meeting was arranged between the two Generals in chief command; and, after a short personal interview, conducted on General Grant's side with all the delicate courtesy due to so worthy and famous an antagonist, the details for surrender were mutually agreed on. The 'Army of Northern Virginia' laid down its arms on April 12.

Surrender of Lee's army.

A Northern account says: 'No official statement has been made of the number of officers and men surrendered. It is estimated that the Army of General Lee, on evacuating Richmond, consisted of not far from 50,000 men. Large numbers abandoned the army and returned home, besides the killed, wounded, and prisoners taken during the pursuit. At the time of the surrender his total force was not far from 20,000 men; * this includes all branches of the service, leaving an effective force of less than 15,000 men. The number of muskets surrendered scarcely exceeded 10,000, with about 30 pieces of artillery. The total captures of artillery during the battles and pursuit amounted to 170 guns.'

Losses it sustained in the pursuit.

To sum up, then, in a few words the special effect that the novel organisation of Mounted Riflemen had in securing the great results of this brief but momentous campaign:

1st. On March 31, the first day of the battle of Five Forks, their double capacity enabled them to hold their ground *unsupported*; to check the tide of defeat, and turn it into victory for the Federals.

* Pollard's Southern account says, 7,500 armed men and about 18,000 unarmed stragglers surrendered.

2nd. On April 1, their double organisation mainly tributed to the success of Sheridan's skilful feint; th sult of which isolated the remains of 15,000 men Petersburg, and thus robbed Lee of one-third o strength at one blow.

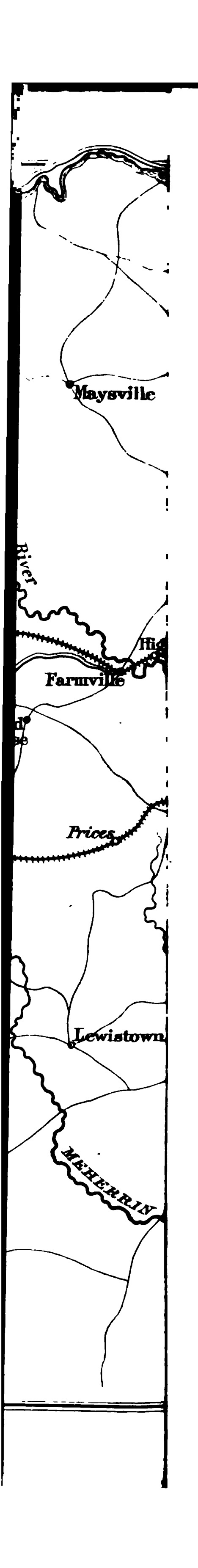
3rd. On April 6, they overtook Lee at Sailor's C and detained him till their own infantry came up in cient force to overwhelm his rearguard.

4th. On April 8, they got between him and his sup cut them off, and thus gave the finishing stroke t exhaustion and feebleness of his army.

5th. On the same day they turned his force off its li retreat, and kept it surrounded near Appomattox C House, till the mass of Grant's army came up an him on the 9th no alternative but surrender. In their double capacity of infantry and cavalry action cepted the retreat at every point, and thus comp frustrated Lee's hope of gaining Lynchburg, retiri the hills, and there, united to General Joseph John army, prolonging the struggle through another year

The 'Mounted Rifle' plan of fighting, first devis the Southern guerilla John Morgan in 1861, had recoiled upon the South with tenfold effect. Imp upon by experience, and lavishly supplied by the a boundless resources of the North in men, arms horses, it became, more than any one thing els weapon that gave the Confederacy its deathblow.

The more the results we have summed up are dered, and the more closely their details are studie more evident does it become that, though the Mo Riflemen of course only possessed speed of movem common with all cavalry, and that therefore any ca might have similarly *overtaken* Lee, YET THAT AL REPEATED SUCCESSES GAINED BY THEIR ***DETAINING*** P ARE DUE WHOLLY TO THEIR RIFLE-FIRE, AND TO TH SYSTEM OF TACTICS WHICH HAD TAUGHT THEM TO MAK


Maysville
River
Farmville
Prices
Lewistown
MEHERRIN

FIRE AVAILABLE UNDER EVERY POSSIBLE CONTINGENCY OF WAR.

Our limited space will not allow us to go into the details of the measures which were taken to follow up the immense successes of the first ten days of April, by such a rapid pursuit of every scattered body of the Confederates as should put an end to all hope of a successful rally.

Suffice it to say, that one of Grant's final despatches speaks of no less than four distinct 'raids' or large detached columns, all on the Mounted Rifle plan: 'One starting from East Tenessee, under Stoneman, numbering 4,000 or 5,000 cavalry; one from Vicksburg numbering 7,000 or 8,000 cavalry; one from Eastport, Mississippi, of 10,000 cavalry; General Canby from Mobile Bay with about 38,000 mixed troops, over 8,000 of whom were cavalry;' irrespective of Sheridan's force of 10,000 cavalry, whose movements we have been following above. In addition to these, there moved from Chickasaw, in Alabama, on March 22, 1865, an expedition under General Wilson, consisting of no less than 12,000 mounted men, all armed with repeating rifles.

These 'raids' entirely fulfilled Grant's anticipation of their effect, that they would 'eat out the vitals' of the states they moved through, and 'leave nothing for the rebellion to stand upon.' They were carried out by a total force of some 52,000 *mounted men*—all armed with, and trained to use, repeating rifles. This is exclusive of some 12,000 more such troops in Texas and the West.

Wilson's raid, after some minor successes, 'attacked and captured the fortified city of Selma—defended by Forrest with 7,000 men and thirty-two guns—destroyed the arsenal, armoury, naval foundry, machine shops, and vast quantities of stores, and captured 3,000 prisoners; on April 4, he captured and destroyed Tuscaloosa; on the 14th, Montgomery, taking many stores and five steamboats.'

Thence he marched on Columbus, and subsequently on West Point. 'At the former he captured 1,500 prisoners and fifty-two field guns, destroyed two gunboats, the navy-yard, foundries, arsenal, many factories and other public property. At the latter he took 300 prisoners, with four guns, and destroyed nineteen locomotives and 300 cars.'

On the 20th of the same month he took possession of Macon, Georgia, where sixty field guns, 1,200 Militia, and five generals were surrendered by General Howell Cobb. Finally, 'General Wilson, hearing that Jefferson Davis was trying to make his escape, sent forces in pursuit, and succeeded in capturing him on the morning of May 11.'

By following General Wilson's route on any atlas, it will be seen that he had literally overridden two great States, and hundreds of miles of ground, capturing their principal cities, overwhelming all resistance, and securing all their resources in war material for the North.

Wherever he encountered forces, even of superior number, sometimes strongly entrenched, the double organisation of his men—enabling them rapidly to 'flank' these entrenchments by wide mounted movements, and then dismounting to place the defenders between two crossed and concentrated or converging fires of repeating rifles—ensured him a speedy and easy success with comparatively little loss.

If Mounted Riflemen could achieve such great things against the steadfast stubborn veterans of Lee and Longstreet, there is practically *no limit* to what they could do for us in India against our contemptible, half-disciplined, ill-armed, disunited Asiatic enemies.

Five thousand picked British 'Mounted Riflemen' might literally ride from one end of India to the other at twenty-five miles a day, carrying all before them. In no other

two countries in the world does there exist a greater general similarity of feature and conformation than in the Southern States of America and in India. The vast wide plains, great rivers, and defective railway communication of the South—which made the movements of infantry too slow and uncertain for the rapid combinations that great struggle called forth, and thus drove both sides, perforce, to adopt the organisation of 'mounted Riflemen'—find their exact counterpart in the precisely parallel conditions under which we make war, to such great disadvantage, in India. If there is a difference it is in the dense pine forests and broken tangled thickets of the South—difficulties which do not exist to the same extent on the comparatively broad, level, and unencumbered plains of Hindostan. This difference, then, is all *in favour* of the easier success of the plan if applied to India.

It would be, moreover, a realisation of the idea which struck our wily foe, Hyder Ali, years ago, in the Mysore wars of the last century; who said, speaking of our British soldiers, 'If I had such splendid men I would take greater care of them than you do: they should never march on foot, but be carried in palanquins on men's shoulders; and then, when we got near the enemy, they should get out fresh and rested, and I would let them loose upon the foe as we slip our cheetahs (trained leopards) in hunting deer!'

Instead of wearing out and killing our men by the long harassing marches under a deadly sun—every mile of the many hundreds of which may truly be said to be marked by the grave-stone of some stout Briton untimely slain by climate and fatigue—and thus bringing them up exhausted and half-beaten only to find their slippery enemy just escaping from their grasp, and all their enduring efforts vain; *henceforth*, the splendid horses of Arabia and Australia would do all the heavy marching. Our men would only dismount, cheery, ready, and fresh, to ply their breech-

loaders, when well-planned, carefully-timed, and closely-concerted flank movements, made at too great a distance to give premature alarm, had already placed their slippery foe in a position where flight would no longer avail him, and where there remained no alternative to him but surrender or death.

Then, indeed, the trembling Asiatic would learn that these pale-faced soldiers—terrible but slow—at whose beards his speed had so often mocked, HAD NOW AT LAST DEVISED A MODE OF WAR WHICH IT WAS AS HOPELESS TO EVADE AS TO RESIST.

This is the one special lesson which, with its proffered reward of immediate economy in time, men, and money, the great American War holds out to us English. If we neglect its teaching, either from apathy, pride, the terrible obstructive power of blind unreasoning prejudice, or from antiquated prepossession in favour of the excellence of our obsolete old-world methods—a thousand times proved to be barren of any results worthy of the name—then, indeed, it may be said of us that contemporary military history is enacted before our eyes—in vain.

CHAPTER IV.

OUR MILITARY TENURE OF INDIA.—DO NOT RECENT IMPROVEMENTS IN ARMS MAKE IT POSSIBLE GREATLY TO REDUCE ITS COST, AND YET TO KEEP IT EQUALLY STRONG AND SECURE?

THE first consideration regarding our military tenure of India is, that it should be manifestly and confessedly so strong and unassailable as to offer no encouragement to any attempt to shake it off.

The second, of scarcely less importance, is, that it should be made as economical as the first consideration will admit.

Thus, as the resistance that certain well-known hostile elements can oppose to us is a fixed if not a decreasing quantity, while on the other hand our means of overpowering that resistance are, we may presume, an increasing quantity in proportion as the military resources at our disposal improve with the advancing progress of the age; it follows, that the force we keep in India should be subject to revision periodically, with a view to such reduction from time to time as by means of advanced military science will enable us still to get the same result —its safe tenure—at reduced expenditure in men and money.

Our present inquiry then is, Do we actually want 73,000 British troops permanently in India?

And to examine this question properly, we must get a distinct idea of the purpose for which these troops are there. In other words, we must examine the exact amount and nature of the resistance they may be any

day called upon to encounter, and their capacity for doing so considered under the two heads of—

I. Force for destroying their enemy.

II. Power for completing their work; that is, speed and mobility for maintaining continuous, effective pursuit till disturbance is quelled.

But before proceeding into this inquiry in detail, it is well here to clear up two points on which general misapprehension prevails.

India, not England, pays for the 73,000 men there.

Though England keeps 73,000 men in India, they are no burden whatever to the English exchequer. Not only does the pay and whole expense of every man of that force come out of the revenues of India, but, moreover, India pays all the expenses of the depôts of all regiments serving there, which depôts, formed into depôt battalions, remain permanently at home, and are a large part of our home defence. The strain to England, therefore, of the maintenance of these 73,000 men is not a pecuniary one, but one in some respects more difficult to meet; that of the supply annually from her population of the 6,000 to 7,000 recruits required yearly to fill up the gaps in that army caused by death, invaliding, or discharge.

Reason generally alleged for keeping 73,000 men in India.

One reason strongly urged by some in favour of not reducing the British garrison of India—a reason which appears most plausible till examined in detail—is, that this system is an *actual economy* to England, for that by this means she is enabled to keep up always on a war footing, without one shilling of charge to the home exchequer, and available for service all the world over, some 28,000 men, whose maintenance on this footing at home, in time of peace, would certainly not be tolerated by the economical spirit of the day; that is, as public opinion stood before the German War. We say 28,000, because this is the excess of the present garrison of India over 45,000, the number it stood at before the Mutiny in 1857. But the fallacy of this argument will be at once

apparent on a little consideration. These men are *supposed* to be available immediately to meet any emergency arising on the continent of Europe or in America. But, in fact, *they are not so available.* Under our present slow-moving system—a mode of military tenure which may be described as based upon the presence of mere gross numbers—they are so distributed throughout the length and breadth of India, that they are not capable of removal on sudden emergency without giving a terrible shock to the public sense of the security of our rule throughout the land: that is—though it will always be a question whether any necessity ever *did* exist for their being sent to India in such numbers—their habitual presence there during the last eight years has *created the appearance of that necessity* in the minds of both the natives and our own countrymen. To remove these extra 28,000, then, or any considerable portion of them—without supplying their places—say, in six weeks to two months, to meet any sudden European demand, would be a hazardous reduction, effected with such a dangerous appearance of pressure and forced haste in the eyes of the native lookers-on, as might in its results fatally endanger our Empire there. Moreover, the probability is, that when we had run the risk of insurrection by this hasty withdrawal, the men would arrive in England, or on any European field, *too late to take effective part in the crisis which had caused their withdrawal.* Six weeks is the shortest time in which any number of them, sufficient to make an appreciable difference in any European contest, could be withdrawn; and this not till the new system of Red Sea steam transport, not yet complete, is in working order. Events, as we have lately seen in Germany, travel with such amazing rapidity in these days, that the question as to which is the stronger of two nations meeting in arms, is decided in a month. UNQUESTIONABLY, THEREFORE, IF WE ARE DEPENDING UPON INDIA TO FURNISH US WITH 20,000 TO 25,000

This belief is wholly fallacious

MEN TO MEET INVASION, OR TO TAKE PART IN ANY EUROPEAN STRUGGLE, WE ARE LEANING ON A BROKEN REED.

And this is setting aside altogether the not unimportant reflection, that the necessity for this withdrawal from India might arise at a time when a coalition of European nations in a common policy against us, might make it impossible, without first militarily holding Egypt, to bring our troops through that country. In this case, they would arrive in England, if they arrived at all, not within two, but at the earliest in four months from the time that it became necessary to commence their recal; for they would have, perforce, to make the long sea voyage round the Cape. IN OTHER WORDS, THE NECESSITY FOR ENGLAND TO HAVE A RESERVE OF TRAINED SOLDIERS TO THE EXTENT OF 25,000 TO 30,000, BEING ONCE ADMITTED, DECIDEDLY THAT RESERVE OUGHT TO BE KEPT AT HOME, AND NOT IN INDIA. By the present system we run the double risk: first, that these men, when withdrawn in the greatest haste from India, would arrive here too late to do any good; second, that the very fact of their withdrawal in that manner would create the danger of insurrection *there*, which would have to be quelled *after* the more immediate peril at home had been overcome—supposing it to be overcome, *without their aid.* By thus keeping our principal reserve habitually at this distance from home, then, we run the twofold risk of its *not being available to us in either country.*

Enough has been said, we think, to show that the place for a reserve in peace times *is at home;* and that—granting that *one* of the main contingencies in view of which that reserve is kept up is disturbance in India—it would better subserve the needs of both countries that our troops should be sent rapidly from England to India, than that by being brought hastily home they should arrive too late, and *then* be as hastily retransferred to quell the insurrection which their hasty withdrawal had been the main cause of producing.

We now proceed to examine the *present* necessity for 73,000 British troops in India, from a review of the forces they may possibly have to contend with, in comparison with those opposed to us in 1857.

In May, 1857, there existed in the three Presidencies a native army numbering about 240,000 men, and a semi-military police of about 80,000; an aggregate of some 320,000 trained armed men, as against about 45,000 British soldiers in the country. As a consequence, too, of the blind confidence we reposed in the natives, almost all our fortresses, arsenals, magazines, and military factories, together with the great bulk of the artillery, and some 20,000 cavalry horses (regular and irregular), fell into the hands of the rebels at the first blow. In addition to these, there were arrayed against us the large contingents of several so-called independent native princes, formidable in numbers, discipline, and artillery, and brought by our own officers to a high state of efficiency. These, together with the insurgent populations in arms against us in districts where every peasant is a born soldier, as Oude and Rohilcund, probably raised the figure of actual armed combatants opposed to us in the early months of the Mutiny to not much less than 250,000 men,* as set against about 45,000 British and some 60,000 reliable natives. The number of these latter, the natives allied to us, rapidly increased under Sir John Lawrence's able measures, which sent a Sikh army into the field to our aid, to about 150,000 in all three Presidencies, before the end of 1857; and before July, 1858, we had rather over than under 80,000 British soldiers in the country.

AT THIS PRESENT TIME, NOVEMBER 1866, ALL THIS IS CHANGED IN EVERY PARTICULAR. The native army of the three Presidencies has been reduced to about 135,000 men;

* This is on the calculation that only 120,000 sepoys, irregulars, contingents, and police levies went into mutiny against us in 1857, in all three Presidencies; which is, probably, rather under than over the mark.

the military police has already been in part, and is in the remaining part in process of being transformed into a purely civil force, armed only with swords and truncheons; the contingents of independent princes have been, some suppressed, all greatly diminished; every fortress, arsenal, and military factory is closely and jealously guarded by British soldiers; and, lastly, only 12 guns, instead of nearly 150 handled by them in 1857, are now manned by natives. Moreover, the whole British force carries the Enfield rifle;* while the natives are wisely, except in a few selected corps, restricted rigidly to the old smooth-bore musket. Oude and Rohilcund, the two most dangerous provinces, have been subjected to a searching wholesale disarmament.

We have, besides, about 5,000 miles of railway in working order, as contrasted with about 100 miles running at the time of the Mutiny. YET, WITH ALL THIS, IT IS CONSIDERED NECESSARY—AS AN IMPERIAL QUESTION—TO KEEP 73,000 BRITISH TROOPS IN INDIA.

THAT IS, WITH NOT ONE FIFTH-PART OF THE RISK TO BE ENCOUNTERED, OR THE POSSIBLE RESISTANCE TO BE OVERCOME, THAT EXISTED IN 1857, WE KEEP A BRITISH FORCE THERE *nearly three-seventh times greater than it was in that day.*

We have shown above (p. 118), that as an Imperial question, that is one affecting the interests of India through those of England, it is most unadvisable that our main reserve should be as at present habitually kept quartered, at six weeks to two months' journey from home.

WE HOPE NOW TO PROCEED TO SHOW THAT THE SECONDARY PART OF THE QUESTION WITH WHICH WE STARTED, VIZ., 'ARE 73,000 BRITISH TROOPS REQUIRED IN INDIA *for India's safety?*' CAN EQUALLY FULLY BE ANSWERED IN THE NEGATIVE.

* The force of 1,400 men, with which General Havelock took the field in July 1857, had only 499 Enfield rifles to the whole number. The rest carried the old smooth-bore musket.

Starting, then, from the sad but undeniable admission, that the recognised object of armies is to destroy, disable, or capture their enemies in the field; it results, that the question of the efficiency of our present Army in India for the objects for which it is maintained, is comprised under the two great heads:—

First.—Of its ability to crush and overcome armed resistance in the field.

Second.—Of its capacity for completing that work by means of a speed of movement which shall enable it to make and keep up effective, continuous pursuit, to quell insurrection.

It may be here objected that we are attempting to divide two things that are in themselves inseparable; that the power to destroy does not exist where there does not also coexist the power to pursue and to *overtake* your enemy. This is so very true that we shall have presently to show that *the one* defect of our immense Indo-British Army for the object for which its presence there is required, namely our safe tenure of India,—a defect so grave that it almost neutralises its gigantic numbers and armed power—*arises mainly, if not entirely, from this very want of speed for continuous pursuit.*

But at present, for convenience' sake, let us continue the inquiry under the two heads into which we have divided it.

As regards the first, then, the power of overcoming armed resistance in the field, our Army in India leaves little to be desired, that is, in consideration of the class of enemies it has, or is likely to have, to encounter. To say nothing of the difference of national spirit and character, or the advantages of discipline and organisation, Armstrong field and siege guns, and Enfield rifles, as opposed to the old artillery, the smooth-bore musket, the flint lock 'Brown Bess,' or the still more clumsy and inefficient matchlock of native armies, or of our own Native Army if it should

again revolt, give us, irrespective of any odds in numbers, a preponderance that is irresistible.

WE HAVE ONLY TO PERSUADE ANY ASIATIC FOE TO STAND LONG ENOUGH TO GIVE US A FAIR OPPORTUNITY FOR BRINGING ALL THESE ADVANTAGES INTO PLAY, TO BE CERTAIN OF GAINING AN EASY THOUGH NOT ALWAYS A BLOODLESS VICTORY.

BUT IN OUR INABILITY TO DO THIS, TO *FORCE* OUR ASIATIC ENEMY TO STAND LONG ENOUGH TO GIVE US FAIR PLAY AT HIM WHEN HE IS NOT DISPOSED TO DO SO, LIES THE WHOLE SECRET OF THE SUPPOSED NECESSITY FOR 73,000 MEN IN INDIA.

Thus, paradoxical though it looks, the battles in our Indian history, between us and native armies, which have been most decisive, have invariably been those in which their possession of a numerous and well-served, though almost immovable artillery, has inspired them with that degree of confidence that tempted them to a 'stand,' that is, to resistance in positions carefully chosen. Resistance which has, therefore, been sufficiently prolonged to enable the superior destructive power of our guns, and the prowess of our troops, to be brought fully to bear.

THE INSTANCES ARE MOST NUMEROUS WHERE, UNDER THESE CONDITIONS, INDIAN CAMPAIGNS HAVE BEEN TERMINATED IN A SINGLE SEASON.

Not forgetting our first great experience of this truth at Plassey, in 1757 ; in 1803 the Mahrattas, under French training, opposed to Sir Arthur Wellesley at Assye and Argaum; in the same year the trained battalions of Scindiah and Perron, that met Lord Lake and General Fraser at Laswarrie, and in 1804 at Deeg; in 1817, the Mahrattas at Maheidpore; in 1843, the Mahrattas again at Maharajpore and Punniar; in 1846, the Sikhs at Sobraon, and again in 1849, at Lord Gough's 'crowning victory' of Goojerat, all found to their cost that the possession of an artillery numerically formidable and

otherwise of respectable character, and the quasi-European organisation of their armies, became at once the bait that lured them on to give us the desired opportunity for a fair stroke; and the false treacherous support, which, failing them in their hour of greatest need, led to their swift, sharp, and decisive overthrow.

THE SAME HOLDS GOOD, BUT IN A STRONGER DEGREE, OF THEIR FORTIFIED PLACES.

In every case, though sometimes after prolonged sieges, their fortresses, by fulfilling the same condition as their chosen positions, so-called regular armies, and trains of artillery, viz., that of concentrating their resistance to a point, and giving the opportunity both as to locality and as to time, to our troops and our more efficient artillery to get a fair blow at them, have invariably brought speedy and irretrievable downfall on the cause which was staked upon their supposed impregnability.

In the last century Seringapatam; in 1803, Allygurh; in 1804, Deeg (the siege which succeeded the battle); in 1819, Asseergurh; in 1826, Bhurtpore; in 1848, Mooltan; and in more recent times, Delhi and Lucknow, fully illustrate this truth.

The one exception that will at once occur to all readers of Indian history, that of Bhurtpore, before which Lord Lake failed in four successive and most bloody assaults, is not really an exception to this general rule, though at first sight it appears to be. For though impregnable to assaults in 1805, and never stormed till 1826, still it was eventually brought down to treat for terms in 1805.

Looking at these four assaults by the light of later events, we can only deplore them as bloody failures in attempts that ought never to have been made; and failures which, under better management and with larger siege appliances, were perfectly avoidable. But it was, in fact, the terror of a repetition of these stubborn assaults, and of the sure punishment which must follow on their final

success, that led the garrison and chief of that stronghold, in April of that same year, to surrender before the preparations for the last attack could be fully completed.

Thus, in the instances given above, a long succession of military events extending over a century, but presenting in a marked degree identically similar features, proves indisputably THAT WHENEVER THEY CAN BE BROUGHT FAIRLY TO BEAR, OUR TROOPS WILL CONQUER IN INDIA, AND OPPOSED TO ASIATICS, AGAINST ALMOST ANY ODDS, AND CONQUER COMPARATIVELY EASILY.

BUT A CAREFUL HISTORICAL REVIEW OF THE EVENTS OF THE CENTURY OF OUR INDIAN RULE *also* PROVES, THAT TO OVERTHROW YOUR ASIATIC ENEMY IN THE FIELD, IS NOT ALONE SUFFICIENT TO BEAT OR DISABLE HIM, UNLESS THERE CO-EXISTS WITH THE POWER TO OVERTHROW THE POWER TO *overtake him in retreat, and to complete your victory.*

NOT BY *dispersion*, FOR *dispersion to rally again* IS A RECOGNISED PART OF HIS FAVOURITE GAME OF EVASION, BUT BY SLAUGHTER, SURRENDER, OR DISARMING.

The events of 1858-59 proved this most clearly, and to our great cost, as will be seen whenever they are closely and critically examined. The brilliancy and èclat of the result eventually attained, but gained more by policy than by arms, viz., the reconquest of India, has served hitherto to disarm or to turn aside as unnecessary any too searching criticism as to the time lost, or the disproportionately large means employed, in obtaining this end.

But as faults, even of organisation, must be seen and acknowledged before they can be amended, it is with a view to the public good to be attained by such examination in lessons for future guidance, and in the immediate saving in public expenditure, and not in any spirit of captious cavilling, that attention is, in the following pages, sought to be directed to some of the more prominent causes of failures in the operations of those two years.

Thus, better knowledge and greater foresight may make similar failures preventable in the future, and give us henceforth greater results at a reduced expenditure of time, blood, and treasure.

THIS FAULT, OF DEFECTIVE SPEED IN PURSUIT, HAS ALWAYS BEEN—EXCEPT IN LAKE'S CAMPAIGNS OF 1803-6—THE BANE OF OUR ARMIES IN INDIA, AND HAS ROBBED THEM REPEATEDLY OF THE FRUITS OF THEIR MOST GALLANT AND ENDURING EXERTIONS.

We shall see, hereafter, how painfully this is true of some of the most important junctures of 1857—when hours were worth months in economy of after toil;—how the same cause of failure is to be traced clearly written on most of the operations of 1858—and haunting us even to nearly the end of 1859, in the fruitless attempts to capture Tantia Topee and similar freebooters; and in the prolonged anarchy and confusion inseparable from their remaining so long at liberty.

What we have to do with at present is the more pleasant task of relating how the genius of Lord Lake, very early in his military reign in India, plainly saw this defect of our Indian Armies—viz., their want of speed for continuous effective pursuit, and how he effectually remedied this deficiency.

Before the campaign of 1803, the quick observation of Lord Lake had enabled him plainly to see this defect, and he had, in anticipation, prepared a remedy thoroughly in keeping with his natural eager disposition, and suggested to him equally by his large military experience, and by the ardent fire of his temperament, intolerant of failure or of half success. Trained in his early boyhood and youth in the wars of the Great Frederick, having served in the British Contingent at Minden under Ferdinand of Brunswick, his mind had caught the tone of his great teacher's lessons. HE HAD EARLY LEARNT THE VALUE OF SPEED IN WAR, AND NOW APPLIED

THE METHODS THAT SECURED PRUSSIA SUCCESS IN THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR AGAINST NEARLY ALL EUROPE IN ARMS, TO FOILING THE SLIPPERY ANTAGONISTS HE HAD TO DEAL WITH ON THE BURNING PLAINS OF HINDOSTAN.

The necessity of having, in addition to his splendid but slow-marching British infantry, a force with sufficient speed to overtake the rapid plundering Mahratta horsemen, a force that should unite the destructive power of fire with rapidity of movement, and thus enable him to foil their game of swift, intangible, un-get-at-able evasion, by first overtaking and then crushing them, occupied his attention in the earliest days of his command in India. Accordingly we read, that under General St. Leger, on the plains of Canouje, 50 miles north-west of Cawnpore, he carefully trained and exercised, all through the winter of 1802 and the spring of 1803, a small but magnificent force of cavalry, consisting of the 8th, 27th, and 29th King's Dragoons, and five regiments of Native Light Cavalry (regulars). To each regiment were permanently attached two light six-pounder guns, worked by men selected from its ranks, and called, in the phrase of the day, 'gallopers,' from being drawn by selected teams, and from having extra spare horses ready for any emergency; so as to enable them to accompany and manœuvre with the cavalry at its greatest speed. THESE GUNS THUS MANAGED, SUPPLIED TO THE CAVALRY THE WANT OF FIRE WHICH IS ITS GREAT INHERENT DEFECT, AND MAKING IT FIT FOR ANY ENTERPRISE OVER ANY DESCRIPTION OF GROUND—RENDERED IT INDEPENDENT AT A DISTANCE FROM THE INFANTRY, TO WHICH OUR MODERN CAVALRY NEVER ASPIRE.

WE SHALL NOW SEE HOW THIS ORGANISATION, UNITING IN ONE ARM, ALMOST IN ONE REGIMENT, THE TWO QUALITIES OF EFFECTIVE FIRE AND SPEED, ENABLED LAKE'S CAVALRY TO GET GREAT RESULTS, SUCH AS ARE UNATTAINABLE UNDER OUR PRESENT ORGANISATION BY EITHER CAVALRY OR INFANTRY

ALONE; WHERE ONE HAS SPEED AND THE OTHER FIRE, BUT WHERE THEIR DIFFERENT RATES OF MOVEMENT PREVENT THEIR WORKING IN CONTINUED COMBINATION.

Narrative of Lake's Campaigns.

To illustrate the efficiency of this combination we must go somewhat in detail into the events of the wars of 1803-6, because we cannot, without considerable detail, show the points of organisation, imperceptible to a superficial review, but all important in reality, by attention to which such great and rapid success was secured in 1803–6; and for want, oversight, or negligence of which, the gigantic forces, the 200,000 men, British and native, we had in the field in 1858–9, practically failed in obtaining results at all commensurate with their numbers, their exertions, and their cost.

For this, a short sketch of antecedent events will be necessary. In 1803, the two great Mahratta powers that the British had to contend with were Scindiah, having his capital at Gwalior, and the Bhonslah or Rajah of Berar, with his capital at Nagpore. To these should be added the nominally Mahratta but really almost independent sovereignty established and exercised between the Ganges and the Jumna by General Perron. This able Frenchman, assisted by several subordinate adventurers of his own nation, had originally taken service with Scindiah to discipline his troops after the European method. He now, holding the lands that had been assigned to him for the maintenance of these troops, swayed almost regal powers at Delhi, Agra, and Futtegurh, ruling ostensibly as Scindiah's deputy, in the name of the blind, aged Emperor, Shah Âlum, but who was, in fact, no more than a helpless captive and puppet in his hands. A third great Mahratta chieftain, Jeswunt Rao Holkar, nominally in alliance with the two first-named, Scindiah

and the Bhonslah, but actually desiring nothing better than to found his own supremacy on the ruins of their power, held aloof from them in 1803, until they had been vanquished by the British. Later in the day he made common cause with them, but at a time when they had no longer an armed force left in the field: his army, though far inferior to those of Scindiah and the Berar Rajah, both in numbers and artillery, proved the most formidable, and eventually gave us the most trouble of the three, from comprising, besides infantry and guns, a force of light horse, of the true Mahratta type, making war after the manner of the Parthian, the Cossack, or the Pindarree—who moving with a celerity far outstripping that of our slower troops, could invade our own territories or those of our allies, plundering, burning, or laying under contribution all in their course, and then vanishing beyond reach of punishment with equal rapidity.

The campaign of 1803 was directed against Scindiah and his officer, Perron, and his ally of Berar; it commenced about August 7, by Lord Lake marching from Cawnpore, and Sir Arthur Wellesley from Poonah; both armies moving almost simultaneously, Lake westward, Wellesley towards Central India.

These two Mahratta powers had at that time at their disposal 72 regular battalions, trained, and in part officered, by Frenchmen; some 200,000 troops of an inferior sort; * several trains of many hundred siege and field-guns, excellently equipped; and held, moreover, many fortresses and strongholds, each requiring a siege for its reduction; amongst others, the imperial city of Delhi, the fortresses of Akbarabad, near Agra, called the 'key of Hindostan,' of Futtegurh and Allygurh in the

* The irregular infantry of the native powers, though not so effective in the field, were considered amongst themselves as a higher service than their regulars.

Doab; of Ahmednuggur, Gawilgurh, Asseergurh, Gwalior, and Culpee in Central India, and of Baroach in Guzerat. Yet, despite these formidable means—or shall we not rather say, in consequence of their serving our ends by centralising resistance in the manner we have spoken of above (page 123)—before the end of December 1803, in four short months in fact, the four severely-contested battles of Assye and Argaum under Wellesley, of Delhi and Laswarie under Lord Lake, together with the sieges that followed, had prostrated these two great Powers in the dust; induced Monsieur Perron and his countrymen to abandon a falling cause, thus destroying the French ascendancy in Hindostan; broken up the confederacy, and forced each separate member of it to sue for peace.

FOUR BATTLES, EIGHT SIEGES AND STORMS, THE ALMOST TOTAL DESTRUCTION OF THE SEVENTY-TWO TRAINED BATTALIONS, AND THE DISPERSION OR SUBMISSION OF THE REST OF THEIR ARMIES, WITH THE CAPTURE OF 738 PIECES OF CANNON, WERE CROWDED INTO FOUR SHORT MONTHS; AND WERE THE WORK OF NOT MORE THAN 55,000 REGULAR TROOPS, NATIVE AND BRITISH, *of whom, be it carefully remembered, less than 10,000 were British soldiers.*

By April 1804, the troops of Lord Lake were returning to their quarters to avoid the terrors of the Indian 'hot season,' which now begins. But, with the unaccountable fatuity and dilatoriness so often seen in Asiatics, the third great Mahratta power, Jeswunt Rao Holkar, now that his aid could no longer avail his vanquished allies in whose favour he might have turned the scale had he declared himself earlier, now broke out into open hostility to us.

His regular battalions only amounted to twenty-four, with about 100,000 other troops, but these included, as we have said, over 60,000 light horse of the true predatory Mahratta type, and about 130 guns.

Yet this force, inconsiderable in comparison with those we had just crushed in a four months' campaign, scarcely one-half as to numbers, having not one-fourth of their artillery, and holding but two second-rate fortresses, those of Chandore and Gaulnah,* in the Deccan—from possessing as its chief constituent that fleeting intangible element of superior speed of movement—baffled for nearly two whole years, from April 1804 to February 15, 1806, the whole military establishments of the three Presidences of India.

What greater proof can there be of the superiority of small, swiftly-moving bodies, as compared with unwieldy masses? Or what better commentary on Napoleon's famous dictum, that 'an Army of 10,000 men that can move twenty miles a day is superior for war to one of 20,000 whose average speed does not exceed ten miles a day?'

To give some particulars of this campaign against Holkar.

Shortly before Lord Lake broke up his army on May 18, 1804, to return to hot weather quarters at Cawnpore and Agra, after the subjugation of Scindiah and the Rajah of Nagpore, Colonel Monson had been sent with five battalions of native infantry (afterwards increased to seven) some guns, and 3,000 irregular horse of our native allies —no Europeans, it will be observed, except a few of his artillerymen—to act in concert with the troops of the Jyepore Rajah in watching Holkar. Holkar had invaded the Jyepore territory a month back; but on Lord Lake's first movement towards him he retired south-east, and recrossed the Chumbul.

Monson had orders to press him in this direction, and thus to co-operate with a force from Goozerat under



† This must not be confounded with Jaulnah.

Colonel Murray, which was advancing north-easterly against Holkar.

This defective plan of joint operation of two detachments which had no intercommunication, against a superior enemy centrally placed between them, had the usual disastrous result.

Colonel Murray retired on Goozerat without effecting a junction with Monson. Monson acted undecidedly; first advanced as if to meet Holkar, then hesitated; finally, on hearing that Colonel Murray had retired, and being short of provisions himself, he retreated towards the Mokundra Pass. He was immediately pursued by Holkar with all his force. His native allies, with their 3,000 horse, at once went over to the enemy. Constantly surrounded and outnumbered, twenty to one, cut off from supplies, and held together mainly by fear of instant butchery if they capitulated, his Sepoy battalions behaved well.

Under the disadvantage of having a leader who could not speak their language, discouraged by want of food, continual fatigue night and day, and incessant rain, they still held firmly together, and repulsed every attempt of Holkar's swarms of horse to break them up; but at each succeeding river that had to be crossed in retreat, they dropped some of their guns and artillerymen; till at last, on August 31, having lost most of their European officers killed, and having abandoned almost all semblance of an organised body, they straggled, a disorderly fainting crowd, into Agra, after a continual retreat of fifty-four days.

This defeat presents a standing warning against ever hazarding native troops alone, without a strong nucleus of British.

Holkar, elated beyond measure at this trivial success, and thinking he saw in it the dawning of brighter fortunes, hurried on, seized Muttra, and hastened to besiege

Delhi, hoping by pressing the siege with all his power and his numerous artillery (over 100 guns) to gain possession of the person of the aged Emperor before Lake could arrive. In this, however, he was foiled by the constancy of the small native garrison under Colonel (afterwards Sir David) Ochterlony, who held out stoutly for eight days against repeated assaults and with several open breaches; till the approach of Lord Lake, who had marched from Secundra, near Agra, with the whole grand Army, on September 27, caused Holkar to disappear from before Delhi in the night between October 14–15, 1804.

Foiled in his attempt on Delhi, Holkar now separated his army into two. His regular infantry and guns he sent southward, toward the Rewarri pass and Bhurtpore; the guns of the largest calibre being helped along by elephants and extra teams of bullocks. He himself with his 60,000 light horse determined to try what could be done by a rapid predatory raid northwards; calculating on the four days' start that he had of Lake, and the supposed necessary slowness of movement of his British troops, to be able to ravage and lay under contribution the rich provinces of the Northern Doab and Rohilcund. FOR ONCE HE RECKONED WITHOUT HIS HOST. HERE LAKE'S FORESIGHT CAME INTO PLAY; HE HAD A FORCE IN RESERVE THAT WAS DESTINED ENTIRELY TO BAFFLE HOLKAR'S PROMISING PLAN. INSTANTLY DETECTING HIS AIM, HE AS INSTANTLY SUPPLIED THE REMEDY PREPARED LONG BEFORE. Leaving his own infantry and heavy guns near Delhi with Major-General Fraser, he ordered him to look after Holkar's infantry brigades, while he himself with the cavalry started on a task more congenial to his fiery temperament and eager ardent nature. Taking the 8th, 27th, and 29th King's Dragoons; the 1st, 4th, and 6th native (regular) light cavalry; some horse artillery; the 'galloper' guns; and one brigade of native infantry carefully selected for their marching powers, he



started, on October 31, in hot pursuit of Holkar. To lighten his baggage, officers and men were 'doubled up' in their tents; and to decrease the number of carriage cattle, a gratuitous issue of six pounds of flour was made to every native soldier and camp follower, to last him for six days, on condition of his carrying it himself. Holkar had gone north from Delhi, crossed the Jumna at Panniput, then east into the Doab, plundering and burning. But he soon learnt to his dismay with what speed Lake was following him; and as this was also well known throughout the country, the main object of his raid—the accumulating a valuable booty—was at once defeated. Every small fortified town or village shut its gates against him and mustered its few hundred matchlockmen for a stout defence. Thus, as he had no time for laying siege, but was forced to hurry along so as to keep each day twenty to twenty-five miles ahead of Lake, he could pick up but an inconsiderable plunder.

'A stern chase' is proverbially 'a long chase.' This pursuit continued in the same way from October 31 to November 16, Lake's cavalry making on an average twenty-two miles a day, and Holkar always twenty-five to thirty miles ahead.

Leaving for a moment both pursuers and pursued, let us turn to General Fraser, who, marching south from Delhi, had come up on November 13 with Holkar's infantry and guns, strongly posted under the walls of Deeg, a fortress in the Bhurtpore territory. He immediately attacked; and after a most severely contested action, in which he himself was mortally wounded, and our casualties amounted to 643, the Mahrattas were completely defeated. Colonel Monson, who succeeded to the command, had the satisfaction of capturing eighty-seven guns (fourteen of them those he had lost in August), and of driving the remainder of Holkar's infantry and guns into the fort of Deeg, which he immediately closely invested.

To return now to Holkar. Incensed at being powerless against the fortified towns, he avenged himself by burning every open and defenceless village in his route.

But the hour of retribution was near at hand. On November 16, when Lord Lake halted for the day, Holkar was thirty-six miles ahead. The distance was great; but, as Lake wisely calculated, the greater Holkar's fancied security the greater the likelihood of surprising him by a forced night march. The rest shall be given in the words, slightly abridged, of Major Thorn, of the (then) 27th Dragoons, himself an actor in the scene:—'Accordingly, at 9 in the evening, General Lake with the cavalry moved on, without tent or baggage of any kind, leaving these to come on with the reserve. Just as we were mounting our horses, the agreeable news of the victory gained over Holkar's brigade at the battle of Deeg reached us, which intelligence made us doubly eager to come up with the chief in person and his much-boasted horse, in order to give the finishing stroke to his power. The moon was up and the night mild and pleasant, so that everyone was cheered in the hope of terminating with this night our late harassing marches. This confidence was increased by the reports which Major Salkeld, Deputy Quartermaster-General, received'—from spies—'concerning the state of the enemy at intervals as we marched along. The day was just appearing on the seventeenth, when the head of our column reached the skirts of the enemy's camp. Their horses were at picquet (fastened head and heels by ropes), and by the side of them the men lay sleeping wrapped up in their "cummuls" or blankets. Several rounds of grape fired into the thickest of their camp from the horse artillery was the first intimation they had of our arrival. It awakened some, but sealed many in an everlasting sleep. His Majesty's 8th Light Dragoons got first in amongst them, charging and cutting them down in all directions; the other regiments doing the same as fast as

Lake overtakes Holkar, and surprises his camp at Furruckabad, Nov. 17, 1803.

they could gallop up; so that in a short time the whole plain was covered with dead bodies.

'Holkar was the first to fly. It was said that he had a "nautch" or dance the evening before, but that in the midst, intelligence arriving of his misfortune at Deeg, he immediately retired without mentioning anything to his chiefs. In the morning, when we were approaching his camp, one of our artillery tumbrils unfortunately exploded; on the report of which Holkar, who owing to the bad news had not slept all night, felt alarmed; but being told that it was the customary morning gun of the neighbouring Futtegurh station, he thought no more of it.' His wakefulness, however, saved him; for though when the firing commenced he could hardly be persuaded that it was Lord Lake's force, which his spies had reported at such a distance the night before, as soon as he was convinced, he galloped off with the troops immediately about him, and never stopped till he had crossed the Kalee Nuddee (river), eighteen miles off.

'The rest of his troops, thus left to shift for themselves, were either cut up or dispersed in all directions.' Many, failing to reach their horses before the dragoons were upon them, climbed up into the surrounding mango trees; but, being discovered, were shot down in numbers.

'The pursuit continued for upwards of ten miles; and as our march during the preceding day and night was fifty-eight miles, the space passed over before we took up our camp ground considerably exceeded seventy miles in twenty-four hours; an effort probably unparalleled in military history, especially when it is considered that it was made *after* a long and harassing march of 350 miles in the space of a fortnight.'

'Our loss was trifling, being only two dragoons killed, and about twenty men, Europeans and natives, wounded, with about 75 horses in the whole. That of the enemy may be fairly stated at 3,000 killed on the field.

'Thus, what with subsequent desertions, and the numerous dispersed parties which never afterwards rejoined their chief, the cavalry force of Holkar was at one stroke reduced to less than half its original strength, which on his arrival at Furruckabad had been rated at more than 60,000 men.'

Remarks on the causes of this decisive success.

Probably never was a more effectual stroke struck by some 3,500 men against 60,000. The completeness of the success was entirely due to Lord Lake's foresight and correct appreciation of his enemy.

IF HE HAD NOT FIRST CAREFULLY AND PATIENTLY ESTABLISHED *the intimate union of fire and speed* IN THE GALLOPER GUNS OF EACH CAVALRY REGIMENT—A THING NOT TO BE ATTAINED BY THE MERE CASUAL ATTACHING OF A HORSE BATTERY TO CAVALRY WHERE THE MEN AND OFFICERS OF EACH ARM ARE STRANGERS TO EACH OTHER—HIS CAVALRY COULD NOT HAVE VENTURED TO COMMIT ITSELF AT SUCH A DISTANCE FROM ITS INFANTRY.

The estimated slaughter of 3,000 men may appear exaggerated at first. But when all the attendant circumstances are considered; the awful terror of such a sudden awakening; the confusion of struggling horses, and men tumbling over each other in the attempt to reach their arms; the deadly grape coming crashing in amongst them; lastly, the delay in getting a horse loose, even if standing ready saddled, under the Indian mode of picquetting (by three single ropes attached to the head and to both heels, which is made necessary by the viciousness of most 'country bred' horses, which attack each other, and even men, like tigers whenever they break loose): when these hindrances are considered, IT WILL BE SEEN THAT THE GREATER PART OF THAT IMMENSE MULTITUDE MUST HAVE BEEN REDUCED IN AN INSTANT, BY THAT SUDDEN ONSLAUGHT, TO THE CONDITION OF UNARMED MEN, WHOM THE DRAGOONS HAD ONLY TO RIDE INTO AND SABRE LIKE SO MANY SHEEP.

The writer was witness to a similar night surprise, on

a small scale, on November 24, 1858, by a force under Brigadier Sir John Douglas, when out of about 250 Sepoys attacked, 40 were killed in less than three minutes *without a single casualty on our side*, and the rest suddenly awakened fled in all directions, leaving over 200 stand of arms, *which they had been unable to reach*, lying on the ground or piled. Here the attacking party were all infantry; consequently only those Sepoys were killed who could be struck down at the moment of surprise—except some half dozen, who were afterwards shot down, precisely as related above, out of trees into which they had hastily climbed.

Great results of this decisive action of Lake's Cavalry.

This blow at Furruckabad, devised, planned, and delivered in Lake's best style, together with that so deftly dealt to Holkar's infantry at the battle of Deeg four days before, brought him tottering down at once from the proud eminence of a first-class Mahratta power.

The haughty chief, who had boasted a few months before his ability to overthrow the English, and had aspired to dispute with us the empire of Hindostan, was now reduced to the position of a dependant on the petty Rajah of Bhurtpore, under the walls of whose fortress of Deeg he sought protection. The greater part of his guns had been taken, and the flower of his infantry destroyed, at the battle of November 13. Lake had since shown him, by the surprise and slaughter of Furruckabad, on the 17th, that not all the vaunted speed of his cavalry could serve to save him from persevering British pursuit, and the heavy punishment and retribution that must inevitably follow.

Hitherto the campaign had gone well with us. A few days later, on December 26, 1804, the fortress of Deeg itself fell to our arms, reduced partly by siege, partly by a well planned and well executed assault. With the fortress the last of Holkar's artillery—worth speaking of—passed into British hands, and the greater part of

the remaining infantry who had escaped the battle of Deeg, and taken refuge in the fort, were either slain in this assault, or surrendered.

Henceforth, his horse being now too reduced in numbers and cowed in spirit to venture on distant enterprises, he was obliged to content himself with hovering round our camp with the sad remnant, and attempting annoyance to our convoys of supply and their escorts. A continued persistent pursuit of his shattered force by Lake's cavalry—leaving his artillery and infantry, as he had done before Delhi the month previous, to mask or blockade Bhurtpore—would probably now have brought the campaign to a short, successful, and brilliant end.

The campaign takes an unfavourable turn for us in consequence of Lake's resolution to besiege Bhurtpore.

But, not content to deal with one enemy at a time, Lake formed the disastrous resolution of laying siege to Bhurtpore. The results of this error in judgment well-nigh wrested from him all his previous solid success: certainly dimmed the brilliant prestige his former achievements had gained. With wholly insufficient siege means, with no engineer of higher rank or wider experience than a captain, he entered on this arduous undertaking under every disadvantage. This fatal mistake had afterwards to be atoned by the lavish expenditure of the blood of thousands of brave men.

Bhurtpore, hitherto a maiden fortress, and destined to remain so as far as Lake's efforts were concerned, stood strongly placed in a wide plain. Town and fortress together had a circuit of nine miles; the fortress built mostly of baked clay—the most tenacious of resisting materials—and surrounded by a wide and deep ditch plentifully supplied from neighbouring inundations. It was perfectly impregnable by coup de main, and only reducible—as was fully proved afterwards in 1826—by a free application of copious siege means, scientifically directed.

The siege began on January 5, 1805. It is foreign to

the present purpose to follow it through all its sad and bloody details. On January 9 and 22, and February 20 and 21, four successive assaults, led by the regimental officers with a headlong gallantry never surpassed, and persevered in by the men—who followed them, when success appeared impossible, to almost certain death—with a fortitude and devotion the narrative of which is one of the most touching episodes in our Indian history, were successively repulsed, on each occasion with frightful loss to us. These four fruitless attacks cost us no less than 3,203 killed and wounded, of whom 103 were officers; and this out of a force probably not exceeding 10,000 regulars.

Raid of Ameer Khan into Rohilcund.

Meanwhile, early in February, encouraged by the failure of the first two assaults, the freebooter Ameer Khan the Rohilla, invited by Holkar to his aid, and tempted by the large bribes offered by the beleaguered Bhurtpore Rajah, joined the hostile camp with some 15,000 rabble light horse. Seeing very shortly after his arrival however, that Lake's watchfulness and quickness, the incessant activity of his bounding 'galloper' guns, and the ever ready sabres of his dragoons, ever diligent to spring into the saddle at a moment's warning, left him no chance of much success in plundering our convoys—and disgusted by the taunts of the Bhurtpore Rajah, who naturally wanted to see a little more result in return for his liberal payments—Ameer Khan started off, on February 7, 1804, on the more promising expedition of a raid like Holkar's. His intention was to overrun his native province Rohilcund; to take what booty luck might throw in his way; if possible, to raise that district against us. Once again Lake—who, though fatally blind to the fact that solid mud walls bristling with guns and defenders are not to be carried by *vive force* without breaching, at all events was in his element in dealing defeat to these flying raids—instantly detached General Smith with the greater part of

Lake sends the British Cavalry in close pursuit.

the cavalry, British and native, and the indefatigable 'gallopers,' in close pursuit.

The Rohilla had only one day's start; Smith followed on his very heels. THIS TIME THE CAVALRY COVERED 700 MILES AND OVER IN FORTY-THREE DAYS. They only once succeeded in bringing him to action, on March 2, 1804, at Afzulgurh, at the very foot of the Himalayas; *but that once was decisive.* The whole of the newly-raised Pathan levies, whom Ameer Khan had attracted to his standard and bound by an oath to fight to the last, kept their word, but perished in fulfilling their vow. They were cut up to a man, after having in the first surprise broken through our first line of cavalry, sword in hand: they on foot, be it remembered. Successive charges of the squadrons of the second line laid every desperate fanatic prostrate in the dust. Ameer Khan and his rascal cavalry, cast in a less heroic mould than the unhappy peasants whom they had lured to their own destruction, fled during the struggle. BUT AS IN LAKE'S PURSUIT AFTER HOLKAR IN 1803, SO NOW, THEIR MAIN PURPOSE WAS FOILED BY THE GREAT SPEED AND PERSEVERANCE OF OUR CAVALRY AND LIGHT ARTILLERY. By continual marching, countermarching, and watching, the British cavalry succeeded in protecting from plunder the principal towns of Rohilcund, Pillibheet, Moradabad, and Bareilly. Following closely on Ameer Khan's tracks, they had the satisfaction of escorting him, as if in charge of him, first across the Ganges on March 14, then across the Jumna on the 19th. They rejoined the camp before Bhurtpore on the 23rd, having fully performed their errand.

The British Cavalry push Ameer Khan back over the Ganges without allowing him time to do serious harm.

After the defeat at Afzulgurh, Ameer Khan, thoroughly beaten and dispirited, the main purpose of his foray balked by the close tenacious pursuit of General Smith, robbed of his expected booty, completely discredited in the eyes of the men of his native province by his undignified precipitate flight, found no more adherents in Rohil-

cund, and was fain to get back as fast as possible to Holkar's camp under the walls of Bhurtpore. HIS ATTEMPTS, EITHER TO PLUNDER ROHILCUND OR TO RAISE IT IN REBELLION, HAD UTTERLY FAILED.

All Indian history shows this mode to be the most efficacious one for dealing with the peculiarly Indian features of this rapid, plundering, evasive style of warfare. The true policy is, not vainly to attempt to guard a long extended line of frontier, easily pierced at many points, with ponderous columns or extended lines of slow-going infantry, whom the light-heeled horseman laughs at, but to take effective measures, *first*, for being quickly informed of your enemy's aim and direction of movements; *second*, to have ready in hand, and to launch in immediate pursuit on their tracks, a force—the smallness of its numbers is comparatively immaterial if complete in equipment and self-supporting in itself—that shall combine destroying power with a speed that can rival their greatest efforts in flight; and that, sticking to their skirts night and day, shall harass natives much more than Europeans would be harassed under similar circumstances; and finally running them to earth, shall force them either to abandon the object for which they started by complete dispersion, or at last, compelled by fatigue and exhaustion too great for further evasion, drive them to turn and face the deadly blows of British arms. Plentiful and regular feeding, good grooming and stable management, together with the higher price we pay for our horses, will always enable us to command this superior speed, as compared with the half-fed cattle of native troops, *if we do not commit the folly of needlessly overweighting our horses with men from their size and habit of body totally unfitted for this active work.*

Remarks on the efficacy of *continuous* pursuit in Indian War.

Superior speed always attainable with good management.

As regards natives suffering more than our own people from the continued privation of harassing pursuits, this is easily accounted for, especially in the case of Hindoos,

by a consideration of the great time and leisurely preparation their religion demands for their food, and the previous ceremonial ablutions.

Natives of India suffer more from continued 'harass' than Europeans.

While the rough Briton snatches his food when and where he can get it, and never loses power as long as he can get a full meal, the more scrupulous Hindoo, and, in a less degree, the Mahomedan also, rather than take food not duly cleansed and sanctified, goes without, or subsists on less nutritious makeshifts, till he loses his strength, and is in a few days of continuous pursuit and worry totally unfitted for sustained exertion.

To return to the siege of Bhurtpore. Finally, after the failure of February 21, Lake was obliged to desist. It became too apparent, even to his unwilling comprehension, that further perseverance with his defective means would be a wanton, bootless sacrifice of brave men's lives. The artillery reported their heavy guns all 'blown'—that is, damaged at the vent—by continuous firing. On February 22 the siege was turned into a blockade, awaiting the arrival of further stores and appliances and fresh guns from Agra and Delhi. Meanwhile, the Bhurtpore Rajah, by no means elated by his success in repulsing the four assaults, but heavily depressed by the everweighing thought of the final successful one which he feared to be impending, and dreading the vengeance which, coming sooner or later, would be all the heavier for being so long delayed, sought eagerly for terms. He found the occasion on the opportunity of General Lake's being raised to the peerage. A complimentary letter of congratulation on this event paved the way to an accommodation. Negotiations for peace were commenced by him on March 10, and finally brought to a satisfactory end on April 10, 1805.

Lake is compelled to convert the siege of Bhurtpore into a blockade.

The Bhurtpore chief sues for terms.

But in the interim Lord Lake, galled by his failures, and ever watchful for an occasion to eclipse them by dealing the slippery Holkar another of his well-planted blows in open field, again brought down signal punishment



on that wily enemy, who for greater safety had retreated during the negotiations several miles south-west of Bhurtpore.

Lord Lake again surprises and punishes Holkar with his Cavalry.

On April 2, having marched all the previous night, the cavalry under Lake in person came upon his camp just at daybreak. Again completely successful in his surprise, he burst in upon the Mahrattas suddenly before they could mount their constantly-saddled jaded horses. Full 1,000 were slain, with but twenty casualties on our side, and the pursuit was vigorously pressed for over fifteen miles.

Holkar's circumstances become desperate.

Now, indeed, Holkar was reduced to that condition that he might truly say he 'carried all his kingdom on his saddle bow'—if even he may be said to have had any kingdom left. In the words of the graphic account we have quoted once before:—'The enemy on this occasion lost several camels, with the whole of his bazaars (camp markets of supply for provisions); and numbers of his troops, seeing the cause hopeless, went off in bodies, thus leaving Holkar to his fate. The condition of this vaunting depredator was indeed wretched enough; and he who at the beginning of the campaign threatened to annihilate the British dominion in Hindoostan was now literally destitute of a habitation and a refuge. Abandoned by his associates, his army ruined, his artillery taken, and Chandore and Gaulnah,* the fortresses of his family, in our hands, the boasting freebooter who expected to have reigned paramount over the empire was driven to the abject state of a wandering fugitive, being obliged to cross the Chumbul southwards with a body of 8,000 horse, 4,000 or 5,000 infantry, and 20 or 30 guns, the miserable remnants of a large and formidable army. His loss in this affair amounted to full 1,000 slain in the field, while ours was no more than two killed and

* This must not be confounded with Jaulnah.

several wounded, besides some horses. The pursuit and ground passed over exceeded fifty miles.'

Holkar's fortunes appeared now to be at their lowest ebb.

Holkar's utter destitution makes him the more dangerous from leaving him more free for rapid movement.

BUT IN THIS VERY DESTITUTION; IN HIS ENTIRE BARENESS OF ANYTHING MORE TO LOSE; TOGETHER WITH THE STILL DANGEROUS POWER OF RAPID LOCOMOTION HE POSSESSED, LAY HIS STRENGTH FOR FUTURE OFFENCE, HIS ABILITY STILL TO WORRY THE BRITISH, WHO HAD SO LARGE, WIDE-SPREAD, AND ASSAILABLE A STAKE IN THE COUNTRY.

Scindiah now threatens again, but is quickly brought to reason.

Scindiah, however, now threatened renewed hostility. Encouraged by our reverses before Bhurtpore, he marched a large force to our frontier on the Chumbul, and forcibly detained in his camp the British Resident at his court, Mr. Jenkins. This tone was, however, quickly lowered. Having still a kingdom to lose, Lake's immediate movement of his army across the Chumbul to Jettore, which occupied April and part of May, 1805, at once terrified him into propriety. He released Mr. Jenkins with every mark of distinction, retired with his army to his capital, and conceded all our demands.

Holkar being nowhere to be found, Lake sends his army into 'hot-weather' quarters.

BUT HOLKAR PROVED HIMSELF 'IRREPRESSIBLE.' For some months he was not heard of, except vaguely as retiring south-westerly through Malwah. Lake a second time broke up his army, and sent them into hot-weather quarters; some at Secundra, near Agra—and at Futtypore Sikree—the rest at various other stations. But, taught by former experience, that as long as life, and hope, and tough enduring horseflesh remained at his disposal, his wily foe Holkar was still dangerous, Lake retained the whole of his army, though in quarters, still *west* of the Jumna, thereby both covering our provinces from incursion, and ready at short notice to start again on the further campaigning, which he could not but foresee was still in store for them. Holkar's restless spirit soon found fresh field for adventure. The Bombay column, under General Jones, returning to its own Presidency through

Southern Malwa and Guzerat, had been ordered to look after him, near Rampoorah; and a large force had also been detached for the same purpose, under Colonel Ball, into the Rewarri district.

Holkar cleverly eluded both.

Towards the end of September 1805, he was again heard of as having—with the elasticity that his wonderful speed and independence of all 'lines of communication' and 'bases of supply' gave—collected some 60 guns 'of sorts' (half of them unserviceable, but still quite good enough for his purpose, to make a show), some 12,000 horsemen, and 3,000 to 4,000 rabble infantry. With these, pushing hastily through the districts west of Delhi, he was now making rapidly for the Punjab; hoping great things from an alliance with the Sikhs, and from raising and banding them against us.

Holkar evades the forces watching him:—and makes direct for the Punjab.

HERE WAS THE THREAT OF A GREATER PERIL TO BRITISH INDIA THAN EVER.

But if Holkar was irrepressibly active, he found in Lake an equal if not superior alertness, perseverance, and determination to crush him. Immediate measures were taken for assembling the army. The 8th, 24th, and 25th * Dragoons, called out from their luxurious quarters in the marble mausoleum of the Emperor Akbar at Secundra, the 22nd Foot and the Company's Bengal European Regiment drawn from the Mahomedan palaces of Futtypore Sikree, took the field all the more vigorously for the ease, rest, and comfort they had found since June in these magnificent abodes of a bygone imperial splendour. By October 20 Lake was in full march towards Delhi. In addition to the whole cavalry—as, this time, there might be more solid foes than the vagrant Mahratta horse to encounter—two brigades of infantry, each

Lake pursues him without loss of time.

* In consequence of a reduction in the establishment of the Cavalry at home, the late 27th and 29th Dragoons had now become the 24th and 25th.

containing one British regiment, and a numerous artillery followed him.

The details of the daily march are unnecessary.

It suffices to say, summarily, that again Lake's rapid resolution and quick appreciation of the crisis, *and his indomitable pluck in pursuit*, thoroughly baffled Holkar's speed and cunning.

A change of policy at the India House greatly favours the Mahrattas.

But our policy towards the Mahratta Powers had undergone an entire change since Lord Wellesley, the late Governor-General, had returned to England.

His successor, Lord Cornwallis, who brought to India the most stringent injunctions to make peace with Scindiah and Holkar on easy terms, and above all to retrench our military expenditure, did not live to carry out these instructions. On October 5, within three months after landing in India, he died at Ghazeepore. His temporary successor, Sir George Barlow, a Bengal civilian, determined to follow strictly, and in their narrow letter rather than their spirit, the orders given to Lord Cornwallis by the Court of Directors; without venturing to make the modifications which altered circumstances and more recent local knowledge would probably have suggested to that statesman, had he survived. All was favourable, therefore, for the entire restoration of Scindiah and Holkar to every acre that the war, so long and wantonly provoked by them, had stripped them of. Fortunately, however, Lake, who was invested with some political power, strenuously resisted this folly. The unsettled *ad interim* state of things, the possession of the military executive strength on the spot, and the slowness of communication attendant on distance in those days, gave him the opportunity of modifying this policy to an extent better suited to the real interests of India, and more in harmony with a consideration of the vast sacrifices we had made during the war.

Lake strenuously resists too lenient a policy.

Holkar pushed on rapidly to reach Amritsur, the sacred

city of the Punjab, which he reached early in December. Lake, though hampered in movement by the infantry and guns, which prudence in this case forbade him to leave, was not far behind. On December 9, 1805, his army encamped at Rajpoor Ghât, on the Beeas river, the ancient Hyphasis; thus for the first time carrying British arms into the classic scenes of Alexander's triumphs. The day before, his native irregular cavalry, pressing on in advance, had been just in time to see the last of Holkar's rearguard—though not near enough to intercept them—in the act of crossing the river. BUT THIS RAPID PURSUIT HAD AGAIN FOILED THE PURPOSE OF THE CRAFTY MAHRATTA. His hopeful plans all failed. The knowledge that he was closely followed kept any but the most inconsiderable of the people of the Punjab from joining him. His insidious counsels fell unheeded on the ears of men, who knew as well as he did that punishment and vengeance followed with no laggard step in his wake. Lake's army made the 405 miles from Secundra to the Raj Ghât in forty-three days, including halts. This promptitude won its appropriate reward.

Holkar reaches Amritsur. Lake close on his heels.

This vigorous pursuit prevents any large rising of the Sikhs,

At a grand Gooroo-Mata, or national council of leading chiefs and priests held at Amritsur, the Sikhs determined to give Holkar no assistance whatever. Circumstances led them to resolve instead on the wiser part, most flattering to their national pride, of acting as mediators between him and the British.

Who determine not to countenance Holkar.

Negotiations therefore began on December 20, and were concluded on the 24th; the representative of Scindiah being also admitted to treat on his master's behalf.

Negotiations between Scindiah and Holkar, and the British.

The treaty with Scindiah was concluded first, and in accordance with the miserable and, as it afterwards fully proved, the shortsighted policy then prevailing in Leadenhall Street,—and now enforced by Sir George Barlow,—

all his dominions were restored to his misrule except the fortress of Gwalior and the district of Gohud.

Holkar attempts to temporise;

Holkar's agents also, upon learning this, felt all their hopes revive. Trusting to gain from our easy disposition and unwariness in diplomacy what they had fairly lost to our arms, they now began a series of delays and evasions, which promptly produced from Lord Lake the threat to break up his camp, pursue Holkar to Amritsur, and fight him wherever he should overtake him. In pursuance of this resolution he marched, on January 5, down the left bank of the Beeas to Gogorwal Ghât, a better crossing-place than Rajpoor.

But Lake marches against him, and brings him to reason.

This firmness brought the Mahrattas to their senses; and on January 7, 1806, the ratified treaty was presented to Lord Lake with every ceremonial and mark of respect.

THUS ENDED THE MAHRATTA WAR OF 1803-6.

That its results in tranquillising and settling India were not final and complete, was no fault of Lord Lake's. The peremptory orders of Sir George Barlow obliged him to give Holkar much easier terms than he ought to have received. The natural consequence was, a continuance of the chronic disorder and misrule of the Mahratta States, that subsequently led inevitably to the second Mahratta War of 1816-19.

But here our diplomacy was to blame; not any inefficiency in our military power.

The sword had done its work fully and completely. It was our wretched policy that forfeited all these dearly bought advantages; that raised our prostrate enemies up again, and restored their ill-bestowed and illused power.

Lake's energy and rapidity of movement, *especially the effective organisation of his cavalry—a compound of fire and speed,*—ably seconded by the courage and endurance of his scanty but indomitable British infantry, had beaten

down all opposition, and shown the wily Mahrattas that neither superior numbers nor speed in evasion could protect them from British power.

Very different must be the verdict of a critical inquiry upon the military events of 1858-9.

In 1859 all the conditions of the success so tardily gained by us in the reconquest of India were completely reversed, as far as regards the numbers in the field on each side.

IN A STRUGGLE OVER AN AREA GEOGRAPHICALLY OF PRECISELY THE SAME EXTENT, FOUR TIMES THE NUMBER OF BRITISH AND NATIVE TROOPS THAT LAKE HAD AT HIS DISPOSAL—ACTING AGAINST AN ENEMY AT FIRST OF ABOUT THE SAME NUMBER AS, AND LATTERLY NOT HALF THE STRENGTH OF, THOSE HE HAD OPPOSED TO HIM—TOOK PRECISELY THE SAME TIME TO ACHIEVE A LIKE RESULT.

Or, if we count the three long intervals that Lake's army spent in 'hot-weather' quarters, while the armies of 1857–9 campaigned continuously without regard to season, *we find that the gigantic numbers we employed in* 1858 *took nearly double the time at their task that the rapidly-moved handful of* 1803–6 *did.*

And to this day it remains a question debated in the mind of many a sharpsighted native, as well as in those of reflecting, observant men amongst ourselves, whether this result—the pacification of India, gained so tardily, and at so great a cost in men and money—WAS NOT FINALLY DUE MORE TO A WISE, CLEMENT, AND GENEROUS POLICY THAN TO THE FORCE OF OUR ARMS. CERTAINLY, RAPIDITY OF MOVEMENT PLAYED BUT A SMALL SHARE IN IT, WHATEVER GIGANTIC NUMBERS MAY HAVE DONE.

When we find results so opposite and so startling—results which only our thoroughly English habit of delighting to get rid of a disagreeable subject at any cost

and as soon as possible, and of counting nothing dear that is finished and done with, have hitherto effectually shielded from too critical examination—surely it is worth while to inquire into the *causes* in detail. Especially does such inquiry become both important and opportune at a time, when the question of the remoulding of our military power, on a footing at once larger and more economical, presses so urgently for examination.

For India is the weak point of our military position. We cannot in time of war on the continent of Europe or America—that is, of any war in which we may be compelled to take part—keep 70,000 British soldiers locked up there. And the system that has prevailed for the last eight years, has made this number apparently a necessity there, as long as that system lasts.

Now, in a time of perfect peace, is our opportunity for facing and solving this problem at leisure, instead of allowing its forced and hasty settlement to come upon us in the midst of some tremendous crisis.

It is neither wisdom nor true patriotism to seek to slur over the comparatively small results gained during the Mutiny by the vast forces employed, or to endeavour to obscure the narrative, and cause its chief points to be lost sight of, by a continual reference to the more pleasant theme of the brilliant actions and praiseworthy exertions and sacrifices of our splendid soldiers. Real wisdom would lead us, on the contrary, carefully to analyse, lay bare, and thus mark for future avoidance, the defects and failings of the past—whether they be in individual leading, or in faults of organisation—in order that we may reap the rich harvest of greater and less costly results in future, by a greater economy of time, money, and precious human life.

The contrast between the 55,000 troops—only 10,000 of them British—of Lord Lake's time, and the 200,000 men (*no less than an effective* 70,000 *of them British*)

considered necessary in 1858–9 for the reconquest of India, becomes still more striking when it is considered that (irrespective of the Punjab, where no disturbance, or next to none, occurred in 1858–9, though it required some 10,000 British troops, with a due proportion of natives, to garrison it), *the extent of area to be subjugated in* 1803–6 *and in* 1858–9 *was almost identical in size*, as anyone looking carefully at the map may satisfy himself.

And supposing the 250,000 armed Hindostanees—only some 100,000 of them trained soldiers—that were in arms against us in 1858–9, to have been equal to the 350,000 troops—a large portion of them trained for years under Frenchmen—of all three Native Powers of 1803–6, surely the immense preponderance of the 70,000 British in the field in 1858–59 over the 10,000 of Lake's time, or even over the 45,000 that were amply sufficient to hold the Mutiny in check till September 1857, can only have been made necessary by some radical peculiarity, either of conception or in detailed execution, in the strategy or the tactics of 1858–9.

What this peculiarity was, in the writer's humble opinion, will be shown farther on. Whether this opinion is or is not borne out by the brief review of our military history of India on which we are proceeding, is for the reader and the public, who are pecuniarily interested in our future Indian military policy, to decide for themselves.

Assuming, then, that the 350,000 troops and nearly 1,000 guns of the Mahratta Powers of 1803–6 were not more formidable than the 250,000 armed men—some 100,000 of them trained soldiers—that we found opposed to us in 1857–9, WHAT WAS IT THAT CAUSED NEARLY FIVE TIMES THE NUMBER OF BRITISH AND NATIVE TROOPS THAT WERE AVAILABLE IN 1803 TO BE FOUND NECESSARY IN THE CRISIS THAT OVERTOOK US FIFTY YEARS LATER?

We look in vain for the reasons in any military or

political necessity arising out of the numbers or the prowess of the foes opposed to us, or the extent of country to be reconquered.

But, perhaps, the following extract from a recent remarkable work on India by the Honourable T. J. Hovell-Thurlow,* called 'The Company and the Crown,' may help to throw some light upon the subject; the more especially as the writer's position in India gave him every facility for being well informed, and that, moreover, while his avowed admiration for the famous soldier who brought that great struggle to a close, leads him to advance the opinion that the demand for those immense numbers was fully justified and borne out, if not by the circumstances, at least by the complete success with which that struggle was finally crowned, he does not hesitate to admit, at least by inference, that the responsibility for the employment of that vast number rests upon Lord Clyde alone, and is divided with no other person.

The author of 'The Company and the Crown' says:—

'Lord Clyde, however, from the first, set his face rigidly against advance, reserving his whole force for defensive operations until the white troops at his command should number seventy thousand souls. Many have since questioned the wisdom and necessity for such a resolution; and, *ex-post-facto* arguments being of special ease in application, it has not proved difficult to spread a crude belief that Lord Clyde might have done his work with less; and that, even had he failed, though England might have lost some prestige in the East, she would at least have been relieved from the necessity of sending half her army to a distant sepulchre.

'Yet these criticisms are of little value, either for purposes of history, or to enable one to form an approximate appreciation of Lord Clyde as a soldier. He came rapidly from England, and formed a just decision from the first.

* Private Secretary to the late Lord Elgin, Viceroy of India.

From this decision he never swerved by the width of a camel's hair. He was obstinate, he had his own way, fought his battles on spots selected by himself, and brought us through a doubtful crisis in our destiny without a moment's hesitation, and with success impossible to controvert.'

In the general tendency of the remarks quoted above we concur most entirely. With as much readiness as the writer do we gladly accord all military honour to Lord Clyde. But from some of the inferences which Mr. Thurlow draws from the facts he states, we must, on the other hand, differ altogether.

Fully granted that Lord Clyde's strategy brought India through a grave crisis—scarcely a 'doubtful' crisis—'with a success impossible to controvert;' that admission touches but half the question at issue.

Doubtless, any criticism that had for its object to disparage that distinguished soldier's military character, or to depreciate the merit of his last great military achievement, would deservedly fall as harmless as it would be uncalled for and ungenerous.

BUT THE QUESTION IS AN ENTIRELY DISTINCT ONE, AND ONE CAPABLE OF BEING DISCUSSED WHOLLY WITHOUT PERSONAL BEARING OR APPLICATION, WHETHER A DIFFERENT SYSTEM BOTH OF STRATEGY AND OF TACTICS MORE ADAPTED TO OUR PECULIAR ENEMY, WOULD NOT HAVE GIVEN US THE SAME RESULTS WITH A SMALLER EXPENDITURE OF TIME, OF MEN, AND OF TREASURE? AND IT IS, MOREOVER, NOT AN IRRELEVANT QUESTION, OR ONE RAISED UNSEASONABLY OR WITHOUT DUE URGENCY. FOR NOW—WHEN OUR WHOLE MILITARY ORGANISATION IS UNDERGOING REVISION, WITH THE OBJECT THAT A SOUND ECONOMY IN ONE DIRECTION MAY GIVE US THE OPPORTUNITY FOR GREATER DEVELOPMENT IN ANOTHER—IS PRECISELY THE TIME, AND NOT ONLY THE FITTING BUT THE ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TIME, FOR CONSIDERING WHETHER OR NOT A SYSTEM CAN BE DEVISED

WHICH SHALL, IN CASE OF ANOTHER OUTBREAK IN INDIA, GIVE US THE MEANS OF QUELLING IT WITHOUT WITHDRAWING OUR MAIN MILITARY STRENGTH FROM HOME AND HOME NEEDS.

And this question can only be properly discussed by reviewing carefully certain well-known incidents of those campaigns, and placing broadly side by side what *was* done with what *might have been* done under different management—not with any view of awarding blame, because, with the (in some respects) defective organisation and means then available, greater results were not obtained, but in order to show how, under certain circumstances, *which may any day occur again in the future*, a different organisation would have given, and consequently may yet give us, infinitely greater advantages.

Looking at the question, then, from this point of view, we have no hesitation in saying that neither the past military history of India previous to the Mutiny of 1857–9, nor the events of that Mutiny itself, nor the subsequent light thrown upon all the questions connected with the Mutiny by a calmer investigation and more intimate knowledge of facts, warrants the belief that more than 50,000 British troops are necessary to the military tenure of India; AND THAT IF A SYSTEM CAN BE DEVISED THAT SHALL GIVE A PORTION OF THAT 50,000 (SAY SOME 15,000 TO 17,000 OF THEM) THE POWER OF MOVING OVER THE SURFACE OF INDIA AT A UNIFORM RATE OF FROM 30 TO 40 MILES A DAY CONTINUOUSLY, THIS, TOGETHER WITH THE INCREASED POWER GIVEN BY BREECHLOADERS, WOULD, IRRESPECTIVE OF RAILWAYS, MAKE INDIA SAFER WITH 50,000 BRITISH, ON THIS SYSTEM, THAN SHE IS AT PRESENT WITH 73,000. RAILWAYS WILL, MOREOVER, GRADUALLY MULTIPLY THIS POWER AT LEAST TWOFOLD.

And for the proof of this assertion, it is necessary to revert to many of the operations of 1858–9, and to examine them closely: not with a view of directing any

shafts at the hard-earned and richly-merited military reputation of Lord Clyde—a reputation first gained when, as a boy, he fought in the glorious fields of Portugal and Spain, and increased through a long series of years passed, with growing fame, in hard service all the world over, till it was crowned with the final laurel won half a century later on the plains of Hindostan—but to examine those operations, so to speak, as abstractions; not as the individual act of any person, with the view of attaching praise or blame to that person, but as matters open to examination under established military rules, and to be condemned or praised according to those rules alone.

It was one of Napoleon's sayings—which, moreover, he acted upon consistently in the selections he made amongst his marshals of men for tasks as various as their characters — that any military operation whatsoever, no matter by whom or whence dictated, would, in its details of execution, take its whole tone and colouring from the peculiar habit of mind of the man exercising supreme military power on the spot.

Whether this is, or is not, borne out by the wide differences between the modes of action employed, and the results obtained, in India in 1803–6 and 1858–9 respectively, remains for the reader and the public to judge hereafter.

The narrative of the reconquest of India in 1857–9, then, divides itself into two distinct periods.

Precisely like the wars of 1803–6, which we have briefly sketched, it passed through two separate, strongly marked, and easily distinguishable phases: respectively those of—1st, Fight; or stern powerful resistance on the Asiatic side, to be overcome by superior prowess on ours. 2nd, Flight; or the stage of evasion on the Indian side, to be met by equal speed and greater perseverance in pursuit by us.

In the early half of the first period, from May to

September 30, 1857, Lord Clyde had no active share: it was carried on, and to a comparatively successful issue, before his arrival. It was a mere stern, resolute struggle for existence between the survivors of the 45,000 British troops, and about the same number of unmilitary Britons, half-castes, and faithful native troops on the one side, against not less than 300,000 combatants, of one sort and another, on the other — some 120,000 of them being either highly-trained regular soldiers, or partially-trained police; the rest martial races of insurgents, who may almost be called born soldiers.

These events admit of no criticism. On the whole, the fight of our race for bare life was made in a manner that redounds as much to the credit of their hearts and heads as of their hands.

Under all the terrible disadvantages enumerated at page 119, the remains of these 45,000 British, aided by the masterly statesmanship of Sir John Lawrence in the Punjab, and by the active help of the army of newly-raised but staunch and faithful Sikh auxiliaries he sent into the field before Delhi, had, on the two great theatres on which it was disputed—Delhi and Lucknow, completely on the former, partially on the latter—reasserted and vindicated the prowess of British arms against all odds before the end of September 1857.

Towards September 1857, and daily from that time till the end of December, there came pouring on to the scene of conflict, first small driblets, then larger numbers, finally the whole magnificent strength of the reinforcement of nearly 50,000 British troops, which England despatched in that emergency to restore her supremacy in the East.

With the very earliest of them came Lord Clyde. By the end of September 1857 Delhi had fallen, and the so-called first relief of Lucknow had taken place. *Both, be it remarked, without the aid of a single soldier from England,*



except the 90*th Light Infantry, and one wing of the* 5*th Fusiliers*; and these, diverted from the expedition to China, can only be looked upon as restoring the garrison of India to its ante-Crimean strength of 45,000 men, the strength it had before it despatched the 10th Hussars and 12th Lancers to the Crimea in 1855.

This is no place to discuss whether, under a different management, the so-called relief of Lucknow, under Sir James Outram and General Havelock, might not have been a real relief, and have succeeded in bringing away the garrison. That was always the object General Havelock had in view between July and September 1857. The writer thought then, and has always thought since, that it might then have been accomplished. Whether that was possible or not, the question does not affect the points under examination here, and is only glanced at to explain the otherwise unintelligible term, 'so-called' relief of Lucknow.

Lord Clyde found the work of the first period, the *beating down resistance*, but half accomplished.

When at last, under the able measures executed under his orders and personal command, Lucknow had *really* been relieved, and by December 6, 1857, the helpless people that formed the mass of its inmates placed in safety at Allahabad, and Cawnpore rescued from the Gwalior Contingent; Lucknow still remained to be captured, Oude and Rohilcund to be cleared from armed rebellion.

The re-establishment of British power throughout Central India was, meanwhile, in good hands. Sir Hugh Rose had that task in charge, though with but an inadequate force for its execution. On his brilliant and masterly operations we do not propose to touch, confining ourselves to a review of the labour that lay before the army under Lord Clyde's immediate command.

But on the latter part of this first period—on the operations which followed the capture of Lucknow, undertaken

for the reconquest of Oude, and subsequently of Rohilcund —our special inquiry, as to the relative value of speed and numbers in Indian war, bears with particular significance.

The siege and capture of Lucknow, in March 1858, demand no special observation. Skilfully planned and ably executed, they were nevertheless of the ordinary nature of all beating down of force by force; if not of superior numbers, yet of such infinitely higher quality that numbers form but a small component element in the calculation.

It may not be out of place, however, to remark that, even the capture of the Palace of the Kaisurbagh, which led to the final abandonment of Lucknow, was not, as is now admitted by all accounts of the siege, effected in the exact execution of Lord Clyde's slower plan of steadfast advance by sap and successive lodgment.

The sudden advance that carried it on March 14— days, if not weeks, before it would otherwise have fallen into our hands—was due entirely to the accidental discovery, on the part of some troops of the Fourth or General Franks' division (notably by Brasyer and his Sikhs), that the enemy were so completely 'on the run' after the assault of the small Imambara, that a sharp pursuit might, as it did, enter the Kaisurbagh simultaneously with them.

FROM THE SIEGE OF LUCKNOW THE REBELS ESCAPED, IN THE END OF MARCH 1858, ALMOST UNTOUCHED, DESPITE THE LARGE AND EFFICIENT CAVALRY WE HAD IN THE FIELD. If five thousand of them were killed in the siege and in the subsequent so-called 'pursuits,' it is the very outside that any calm observer present at these scenes will attempt to put their loss at.

If, moreover, that city and its suburbs contained, as was said at the time, one hundred thousand armed men when we approached it on March 2, 1858, FULLY EIGHTY THOUSAND (THAT IS, ALLOWING FIVE THOUSAND FOR KILLED

AND FIFTEEN THOUSAND FOR WOUNDED—AND TWO-THIRDS OF EACH WOULD BE MUCH NEARER THE MARK) MUST HAVE ESCAPED WHOLLY UNHURT BEFORE MARCH 25, TO CARRY REBELLION ELSEWHERE.

AND HERE OUR INQUIRY AS TO WHETHER A SYSTEM THAT SHOULD GIVE OUR CAVALRY THE DESTRUCTIVE POWER OF ORDINARY INFANTRY FIRE, COMBINED WITH THEIR OWN SPEED OF MOVEMENT FOR TACTICAL MANŒUVRE OR PURSUIT, WOULD NOT HAVE GIVEN US GREATER RESULTS, IS SPECIALLY APPROPRIATE. Nobody desires less than the writer to blame those concerned in these pursuits for not having accomplished more with the defective organisation they had at hand. WHAT IS DESIRED IS TO SHOW HOW, UNDER SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES, WHICH MAY OCCUR ANY DAY, AN IMPROVED ORGANISATION WOULD GIVE US IMMENSELY INCREASED RESULTS IN THE FUTURE. Thus alone can we benefit by the lessons of past failures.

From March 19 to 23, the mass of the rebels—at least 80,000 strong of all sorts—poured out of Lucknow westward and north-westward; *and effected this retreat with almost perfect impunity.* True, on March 19, there was an attempt made by the cavalry under Brigadier Campbell, together with two regiments of infantry and some artillery, to intercept the escape of large masses issuing from the west and south-west of the city. But this ended, for obvious reasons, in almost entire failure. If two hundred rebels were killed it was the utmost that was done. The rest escaped unhurt.

The excuse for this wholesale escape of the rebels, which had held good when, in July 1857, Havelock started on his weary sun-stricken march from Allahabad, now no longer existed.

His force then consisted of some 1,300 infantry, eight guns, drawn by wretched teams of bullocks, *but only eighteen British horsemen.* His utmost efforts in seizing every available horse afterwards, to mount fresh men

taken from his infantry, never succeeded in raising this little band to more than seventy sabres.

Hence, the inevitable escape of the Sepoys opposed to him in the fights where his infantry had no alternative but to march steadily up to the muzzles of the rebel guns, placed in positions generally flanked by inundations, only to find themselves robbed, by the successful evasion of their slippery foe at the last moment, of any fruit commensurate with their labours and their losses by death and wounds.

BUT IN MARCH 1858 THERE WAS AN ABUNDANCE OF EXCELLENT BRITISH CAVALRY IN THE FIELD. In the Presidencies of Bombay and Madras the 8th and 14th Hussars, the 12th and 17th Lancers, and, later in the day, the 1st and 3rd Dragoon Guards, ably represented that arm. Not to speak of the 6th Carabineers detached elsewhere, in the army before Lucknow under Lord Clyde's personal command, the 2nd Dragoon Guards, the 7th Hussars, the 9th Lancers, and the 2nd battalion of the Military Train acting as cavalry—in all some 1,500 British horse, supplemented by nearly 3,600 most efficient native cavalry—gave him the materials which, under such a tried and chosen cavalry leader as Sir Hope Grant, awaited but the approval and the signal from head-quarters to have rivalled, if not to have surpassed, the achievements of the dragoons of Lord Lake's day, in effective and telling pursuit.

A magnificent Horse Artillery, animated by a zeal, stimulated by the generous emulation between the representatives of three different services—the Royal, the Bengal, and the Madras Artillery—stood ready to second this cavalry in detached movements, that should have followed the retreating enemy, hung upon his traces, and embarrassed if not prevented, an early rallying for further resistance.

Moreover, the whole of the infantry regiments recently

arrived from England carried Enfield rifles, and a few riflemen mounted for speed on the spare waggons of the artillery, or, as was done later—but with no marked success because tried on so small a scale—mounted on camels, would have made a flying force for pursuit, secure even in presence of masses of infantry, from being composed of all three arms united.

We have seen what Lake would have done under similar circumstances, by the narrative (see pages 134, 140, 143, 147) of what he *did* do at Futtegurh and Afzulgurh, and after Bhurtpore.

IN 1858 SUCH PURSUIT WAS NEVER MOOTED, OR ELSE IT WAS THOUGHT TOO HAZARDOUS. Lord Clyde's early experiences in war, and his later commands in more advanced age, savoured more of the irresistible but slow, measured, and ponderous tramp of the splendid infantry, in the training and perfecting of which all his life—first as a regimental officer, then as a brigade and division commander—had been passed. He had come to look upon a battalion of British infantry as a sacred entity, whose preservation complete without detachments, intact, *and, above all, unhurried in movement*, was a consideration of far higher importance in his mind than the attaining of any results, however brilliant, by means of rapid, undignified, and irregular action.

Thus, all his strategy made the infantry its centre and spring, and the two faster-moving arms but subordinate actors, to be guided and regulated by it, and to follow in its wake.

Thus, throughout his Indian campaigns of 1858–9, we must look for no greater results of speed than are attainable by infantry rates of movement; and this, moreover, in a climate where the most stout and indefatigable British infantry would find its marching limit reached in four successive stages of 25 miles a day; while, on the contrary, the slippery antagonists

against whom it was arrayed in 1858—the revolted Sepoys and their allies—were capable of doing easily 30 to 35 miles a day for any number of days together.

Unencumbered with baggage, lightly and serviceably clothed for war, carrying nothing but his arms and ammunition, not suffering from the climate, relying on the whole country for supplying his commissariat, the Sepoy was able to laugh at our infantry, whose many wants reversed all these conditions of independence. He could easily give them a margin of ten miles a day in a pursuit, and yet keep comfortably ahead.

But, on the other hand, it would not be fair to suppress that there appeared to be considerable ground for any reluctance that may have existed in the mind of the Commander-in-Chief to launch our British cavalry and horse-artillery alone in pursuit, at a distance from, and unsupported by, infantry.

The very inconsiderable destroying power our cavalry as individuals possess, under their present organisation, in a great measure justified this reluctance.

Everywhere and invariably the Sepoy felt at his ease, directly he had outmarched the Enfield-carrying British infantry.

He then proceeded to lead the cavalry and horse-artillery pursuing him a chase, whose direction designedly pressed over and through every description of broken ground and jungle cover. No skirmishers in the world could know better how to turn these obstacles to the best advantage than these miscreants, rendered for the time a steady infantry by the knowledge that they fought with the halter round their necks, and that there lay before them but the alternative of death by sword or by gibbet, unless they succeeded by a steady aim, and the appearance of a cool front, born only of the deadly despair in their coward hearts, in beating off their pursuers by shooting down the most persistent.

In these cases, either the leading officers, or the most skilful and forward horsemen and swordsmen amongst the men, fell victims to their own valour, misapplied under a faulty organisation; and with their fall, the combined effort of the rest—as far as regarded successful pursuit—was paralysed and ceased.

Whether this assumed but effectual steadiness of the Sepoys arose from the contempt for cavalry with which many years of service under British colours and drill in British ranks had taught to the renegade soldiers of the Bengal Army, or whether it was only caused by the despairing courage that will make even a cat fight to the last when hemmed into a corner, the *result* was, that our cavalry never, at least in the writer's experience, in spite of their ever ready devotedness, made a slaughter at all to be compared in value with the cost of their own losses.

To these two causes mainly, then, is to be attributed—as far as tactics are concerned—the dreary, unnecessary length to which all the operations of the Mutiny, after it had passed out of the stage of stand-up fighting, drew themselves out.

PARTLY FROM A RELUCTANCE TO HAZARD THE CAVALRY IN SUCH PURSUITS AS IN LAKE'S TIME, AND UNDER THE SPECIAL ORGANISATION HE DEVISED, COMPENSATED FOR HIS MISTAKES, AND BOUGHT BACK ALL HIS LOST ADVANTAGES; PARTLY FROM THE ALMOST TOTAL WANT OF DESTROYING POWER IN OUR CAVALRY UNDER ITS PRESENT TRAINING, ALMOST ALL OUR PURSUITS CAME TO NOTHING.*

* Two brilliant instances of great success gained by Cavalry and Horse Artillery alone—in both cases under leaders who knew the characteristics of their peculiar enemy well, and had the tact and the hardihood to profit by the knowledge,—should not be passed without notice here.

On December 9, 1858, after the battle at Cawnpore, Sir Hope Grant was detached with the 9th Lancers, some native cavalry, and the Horse Artillery, to pursue the flying rebels to Sheorajpore Ghât, 25 miles distant. He came upon them in the very act of crossing the Ganges into Oude; attacked them, and after inflicting severe loss, captured the whole of their guns, fifteen in

The Sepoys soon saw this, and began to count upon our inability to hurt them as an element of power for themselves; which they learnt always to turn to their advantage in the one object they had in view—that of prolonging, by every possible means, their reign of plunder and license.

OUR INFANTRY, OF COURSE, COULD NOT CATCH THEM; OUR CAVALRY MIGHT NOT, OR COULD NOT, AT ALL EVENTS CERTAINLY DID NOT, SERIOUSLY HURT THEM IN PURSUIT.

SO THE WEARY GAME DRAGGED ON FROM MONTH TO MONTH, WITHOUT DECISIVE RESULT.

As with the operations immediately succeeding the evacuation of Lucknow by the rebels, so also the subsequent campaign in Rohilcund, in May and June 1858, cannot be looked at, when it is examined as the application of a means to an end, as anything but an elaborate failure. Failure, not in the sense that the object in

number. His own troops *suffered not a single casualty*, and had only one horse killed. His infantry arrived only in time to witness without sharing in his complete success.

On June 21, 1858, Sir Robert Napier, now Commander-in-Chief at Bombay, illustrated in the highest degree what can be done by judicious boldness and dash against an Indian enemy. With the 14th Light Dragoons, some native troopers, and Lightfoot's battery of Bombay Artillery, he pursued the remains of the 'Army of the Peshwa,' which Sir Hugh Rose had signally defeated at Gwalior the day before. Marching all night and great part of next day, his handful of men, not 600 in all, came up with full 6,000 Sepoys, with thirty guns, at Jowra Alipore. The odds were heavy enough to have justified every caution.

But Sir Robert Napier had read the lessons of our Indian military history aright. He chose at once the boldest and the safest course. First bringing his six guns to bear under favour of rising ground, he then charged down into the thickest of the enemy, before they had recovered the effect of that sudden surprise. The complete dispersion of the rebels, and the capture of twenty-five guns, with a very slight loss on the British side, rewarded the sound discretion and the well-timed boldness of this most effective blow.

These happy strokes, shining out all the more brilliantly for the surrounding gloom of long-drawn indecisive operations, show plainly that the same great results that Lord Lake obtained in 1803–6 were well within our reach in 1858–9, if superior authority, that gave the tone to the whole campaign, had sanctioned and countenanced the employment of the necessary means.

view was not, somehow or other, and by indirect and tardy means, eventually accomplished—this no one will deny: but failure in the sense in which all undertakings are judged, by the standard of this commercial and money-loving world; in the sense of a lavish waste of power, of requiring *three men to do the work of two*, and then getting it done but slowly and incompletely by the three, at of course immensely increased cost.

Let any one read Mr. Russell's graphic account of these operations in Rohilcund contained in his 'Diary in India,' and go into the details of the time required, the immense means in men and guns applied, and the small result gained in the slaughter, disabling, or enforced surrender of any portion of the enemy, and say then, whether this was, or was not, practically a failure.

At the battle of Bareilly, on May 6, 1858—the crowning action of the Rohilcund campaign—the city, indeed, fell into our hands, as it probably would have done, being almost wholly unfortified, if five thousand, instead of some twenty thousand, British troops had approached it.

BUT WHAT OF THE REBELS THEMSELVES?

Though placed, as it were, between two forces—for General Jones had been drawing near them from the north-west, and Lord Clyde from the south-east, for several days,—they escaped almost unscratched.

Here, as at Lucknow, the same unsatisfactory result was due to the same causes: our slowness of movement, and our inability to see that *the living masses of rebels*—not cities, however important—were the objects to be struck at, if we would produce decisive effects.

We have already touched on Lord Clyde's predilection for infantry rates of movement. His early experiences had been in combat against the fierce and impetuous warriors of France. Later he had seen the stern fighting of the Russians in the Crimea. Even his purely Indian experiences—those of the stiff battles of the second Sikh

War, and against the sturdy and fanatical hill-tribes of the Peshawur and Eusofzye valleys—had been against foemen of a totally different fighting calibre to the recreant Sepoys now opposed to him. Naturally, but most unfortunately for the cost to England of the war, the traditions of his early days clung to him, and hampered his movements, at a time when speed was worth everything else. The soldiers of a wider Indian experience, who might have told him that these slow movements were a mistake against such a foe, were no longer there to advise. Nicholson, Neill, Havelock—who had each shown his correct appreciation of their peculiar enemy, alike by rapid dash on fitting occasion, as by the most wary caution on others, each quality in its appropriate time and place—had passed away. Outram was absent, called to other fields of labour in the Council Chamber of Calcutta. There remained around Lord Clyde, only either Indian officers of too junior a standing to have weight on such a question, or older soldiers of Crimean and European fields, whose experience tallied with his own.

Consequently, his whole movements took their tone entirely from the natural wary bent of his mind, and from his experience of European war, here wholly misapplied. Therefore he approached positions held by 20,000 or 30,000 Sepoys and rabble with the same ceremony as if they were about to be sternly defended by serried columns of French or Russians.

The natural consequence was, that no decisive results worthy of the name followed the enduring and praiseworthy labours and exertions of the troops; while, on the other hand, the protracted exposure to climate and the hardship they underwent were as great as, if not greater than, in the most successful and decisive Indian campaigns.

And thus it happened that—partly from the wholly exceptional nature of the warfare he was now for the first



time waging, partly from the tactical inefficiency of our organisation for operations requiring in the highest degree speed of movement,—the splendid weapon that Lord Clyde wielded was innocuous in his hands to these slippery enemies; and his very merits and high military virtues of caution and circumspection, which had so often carried the stern Peninsular veteran victorious over more worthy foes, were here, by force of adverse circumstances, strangely turned to faults, and acted to our disadvantage.

EVERYWHERE THE REBELS ESCAPED ANYTHING LIKE PUNISHMENT, BY THEIR SUPERIOR SPEED. They were approached with as many precautions and observances as if they intended to fight to the last, whereas they never had the remotest idea of doing anything of the sort. They never proposed to themselves anything but to make for a short time a mere nominal stand; firing their rickety guns as long as they could do so with impunity, and then leaving the artillery, which they prized only as the means of making a show, and bolting, to renew their real and much more profitable game of plunder, elsewhere at a safe distance.

This was the case even *before* the native resistance had passed out of the stage of 'fight' into that of 'flight,' which it may be said to have thoroughly done by the end of June 1858.

After that the war was, simply and wholly, a scene of successful evasion on one side—systematic, acknowledged evasion, for the purpose of prolonging the reign of license and plunder elsewhere—and of ineffectual, almost ludicrously helpless, attempts at pursuit on the other.

And this pursuit *was* ineffectual and helpless, simply and solely because *this plain characteristic of the native mode of warfare was never distinctly recognised on our side.*

OUR MAGNIFICENT FORCE WAS CAPABLE OF CRUSHING ANYTHING—IT COULD OVERTAKE NOTHING. IT HAD, AS IT WERE,

POWER TO GRAPPLE WITH AND OVERTHROW AN ELEPHANT—A LAME TORTOISE MIGHT EVADE IT IN FLIGHT. And this arose mainly from the inability or unwillingness, in the mind charged with the strategy of that campaign, to see that the measures that might, and probably would, have produced immediate decisive results on an European theatre of war, were wholly misapplied and ineffectual here.

Thus, while we laboriously planned great and crushing blows against *places* and strategical *points*, the living and moving centres of rebellion, the armed masses of Sepoys—to whom one place was as good as another, as long as they could plunder, ravage, and escape unhurt—laughed at the wholly self-imposed fetters in which our splendid forces appeared to be bound.

Half a century before, Lake's keener insight had caught at once the principle involved—had clutched it fast, and by ready and able adaptation of means to an end, carried his great enterprise to a swift termination.

The strategy of 1858–9 followed the school rules conscientiously, perhaps somewhat too minutely; but the substance aimed at—the speedy discomfiture of our enemies—continually evaded its grasp, amidst the blinding maze of details of wholly novel conditions of war. In this one respect, of readiness to catch the obvious principle of his foe's mode of war, and to make a modification to meet it, by giving some part of our force greater mobility, probably many men would have been better suited to the peculiar crisis than the famous soldier then commanding, whom half a century of service had made rigid in adherence to the established precedents of his day, and steadfast in avoiding any risk that might dim, however little, the lustre of his well-earned renown.

A younger man, or one who had reputation yet to gain, might have made some sacrifice of certain safety, in order to obtain a greater result. And all Indian military

history bears out the assumption, that in proportion to the ability and readinesss with which the risk was encountered, so would all risk have disappeared and been neutralised.

But no European emergency pressed us; he had 80,000 British at his sole disposal, whose weight *must* eventually tell; and Lord Clyde persevered with the old methods, in spite of the weary months through which the results were withheld.

And as this course undoubtedly brought us complete ultimate success, criticism would rightly be hushed for ever, BUT FOR THE FACT, OF DAILY INCREASING SIGNIFICANCE IN THESE DAYS OF GIGANTIC ARMAMENTS, THAT THIS MILITARY POLICY HAS ENTAILED ON US THE APPARENT NECESSITY OF KEEPING 70,000 BRITISH SOLDIERS PERMANENTLY IN INDIA EVER SINCE, WHICH WILL SOME DAY, VERY SHORTLY —IF IT HAS NOT ALREADY—BECOME AN IMPOSSIBILITY FOR US.

Meanwhile rebellion lasted on, if it did not flourish.

It might have continued till now, had not the accomplishment of two of the main objects, by the recapture of Lucknow and the evacuation of Bareilly, the capital of Rohilcund, permitted the task of crushing out resistance in detail, to be entrusted to the many subordinate commanders, whose more vigorous, if not equally scientific and dignified, mode of dealing with the various scattered bands of rebels, was no longer closely hampered by the over-caution which was the rule at head-quarters. When officers were left to the dictates of their own energy and ready resource, matters at once took a more practical turn.

But be it remarked that, with the escape of the great mass of rebels—probably in each case nearly 80,000 strong—first from Lucknow, then from the Rohilcund campaign, *the opportunity for striking great and decisive blows also to a great extent departed from us.*

Henceforth they no more congregated in these great masses, but spread all over the country. And this

dissemination produced a necessarily similar scattering on our part, which, by vastly increasing the area for action, naturally greatly diminished our power.

The golden opportunity, which we had twice overlooked or neglected, of striking heavily at them while they held together in great bodies—once allowed to elude our grasp—never returned.

By August 1858 the nature of the struggle, on the native side, had passed, wholly and unmistakably, into the 'flight' and evasion phase. Long ago the hopelessness of the strife, for any end of eventual dominion on their part, had made itself perfectly plain to the minds of the leaders of the rebellion. They continued to use every possible means—by the most palpable and barefaced falsehoods, by the most profuse promises, when no other method would avail them, then by parting with a portion of their cherished personal treasure—to persuade their followers that the game still was in their hands; that they might still hope for ultimate success.

But this delusion was one not easy to maintain. The ignominious way in which they were kicked from pillar to post, whenever they met any moderately well-handled body of our troops, however inferior in numbers, was an argument intelligible to the meanest capacity.

And latterly, side by side with our tardy military measures, there moved, under Lord Canning's generous and well-judged 'clemency policy,' an offer of wholesale amnesty, from which none but those rebels dyed in the guilt of actual murder were excepted. And after this measure of conciliation had been made still more acceptable, and deprived of any remnant of sting, by the concessions made to Outram's earnest pleading for a reconsideration of the sweeping confiscation at first pronounced against the great Oude talookdars, it is not wonderful that, rapidly and surely, all but those few rebels too deeply compromised to hope for pardon, fell off from

the cause—first in daily hundreds, then in thousands—and hastened, each in his position, to make terms with the dominant foreigners.

THUS, IT IS NO EXAGGERATION TO SAY THAT THE MUTINY DIED OUT; IT WAS NEVER, IN THE STRICT MILITARY SENSE OF THE WORDS, *CRUSHED OUT* BY THE FORCE, CERTAINLY NOT BY THE RAPIDITY OF MOVEMENT, OF OUR ARMS.

The flame of rebellion, raised almost entirely from one limited supply of fuel, the mutinous Bengal Army, languished as that supply slackened, and died out when it no longer existed to feed the fire.

The Mutiny was almost purely a military revolt, caused by the sudden sense of uncontrolled power that our credulity and infatuation had put into the hands of the Bengal Sepoys; fed mainly by the hope of plunder raised in the minds of the lawless classes, and only incidentally and indirectly fanned by any participation of other sections of the people politically disaffected to our rule.

Of the one hundred thousand Sepoys that went into rebellion against us, in May and June 1857, probably not more than forty thousand, first and last, were killed or wounded in action by us. But many died from disease, hunger, and want of proper medical treatment when wounded; and, in some districts, in the brawls and petty fights that sprang up between the inhabitants and themselves on account of their ill-gotten riches.

Hundreds, nay thousands, of Sepoys, who belonged to regiments that had been disarmed, and had been sent on furlough to their homes in May and June 1857, had taken the precaution, before leaving their military stations, to provide themselves with certificates of that fact, stating that they had 'taken no part in the Mutiny.' These almost universally took up arms on reaching their own districts, and did their worst against us as long as the game looked favourable.

Many scores of these 'leave certificates' were found on

Sepoys killed in action all over India. But, as soon as the tide had turned in our favour, these men were the first to march, demurely, gravely, and respectfully, up to the nearest magistrate, and claim the amnesty under these certificates, or even to seek enlistment in the new native levies we were then raising.

THUS THE OLIVE-BRANCH WHICH OUR GOVERNMENT HELD OUT IN ITS LEFT HAND DID MORE TOWARDS THE SUPPRESSION OF THE REVOLT THAN THE, IN ONE SENSE, ILL-DIRECTED SWORD THAT WAS GRASPED IN ITS RIGHT.

That it should have been so cannot but be acceptable to all men who would desire to see the wounds of such a strife healed rather by conciliation than by force.

But the philanthropic view of the question is entirely distinct from the military one, with which alone, for the present, these pages have to deal.

And it is questionable whether, even from the philanthropic side of the matter, a military policy that should have proved itself *swift* as well as sure to punish and to quell disturbance, would not have been the soundest, widest, and most lasting humanity to the greater number in the end.

Two more notable instances shall now be given, drawn from the events of the Mutiny, where our tactical organisation, as it then was, *and as it is still*, showed itself utterly ineffectual to cope profitably, that is *economically*, with the peculiar conditions of Indian fighting, either in insurrection or in war. We will then close this part of our subject.



The one case was on May 10, 1857, at the moment when the first stunning, blinding shock of military revolt burst upon our unsuspecting heads.

The other occurred on the last day of December 1858, when, one would have supposed, the daily shortcomings

of our tactical system for pursuit, displayed during nineteen months of continuous fighting, might have awakened sufficient enquiry into the only too palpable causes, to have suggested a remedy to some of the wise, experienced, and capable heads conducting the war.

First, then, let us look at the military station of Meerut, in the North-west Provinces, garrisoned by no less a force of white troops than one regiment of dragoons, one battalion of most efficient infantry (60th Rifles), and two troops of British horse-artillery: a force compact and complete in itself; capable, *if it only had been moveable*, of crushing utterly any given number of Sepoys in fair fight. Quartered with this British force were the 11th and 20th Regiments of Native Infantry, and the 3rd (Native) Light Cavalry.

On the afternoon of Sunday, May 10, these Sepoys—not more than 2,200 in all, and, be it remarked, possessing no artillery—broke into open revolt, burnt the greater part of the station, murdered every straggling European about the place, including many women and children—all this with next to no opposition from a British force strong enough to have destroyed every man of them, if their numbers had been thrice-told—and, having got their fill of plunder, proceeded at nightfall to march off, deliberately, to take possession of Delhi.

The imperial city, forty miles off, the centre of the hopes of all the disaffected throughout India, was garrisoned only by three native battalions, only too ready to stretch out their arms to welcome the victorious (at least entirely successful) mutineers. We are not bound to pronounce any judgment on the weakness that permitted this prize—destined to be the nucleus of successful resistance through so many months of weary struggle—to fall without a stroke into rebel hands.

Whose fault soever this sad mistake may have been, IT WAS, MOREOVER, ONLY THE NATURAL CONSEQUENCE OF THE

COMPLETE TACTICAL INEFFICIENCY OF OUR TROOPS, FOR ANY ACTION REQUIRING RAPIDITY AND DESTROYING POWER *COMBINED*. THE INFANTRY MIGHT HAVE PURSUED, BUT WHAT CHANCE WOULD THEY HAVE HAD OF OVERTAKING, IN THAT CLIMATE AND SEASON, MEN WHO COULD EASILY DO 40 MILES BETWEEN DARK AND DAYLIGHT? The cavalry might, if pushed on alone, or together with the horse-artillery, have easily overtaken the Sepoys on foot; the guns might, by repeated rounds of grape and canister, have inflicted some loss: but the after-experience of the whole campaigns of the Mutiny shows that they would have been utterly unable to prevent the mass of the rebels from getting well away, and reaching Delhi before them.

Supposing—which is most unlikely, though a river halfway, crossed by a narrow bridge, afforded considerable facility for doing so—they had succeeded in bringing that portion of the two Sepoy battalions that held together to bay, and had even turned them off their line of march; the 3rd Light Cavalry would, at all events, have ridden off intact, and got safe into Delhi—as would probably, a few hours later, most of the infantry also, whose game would have been to break up into small bodies, so as to baffle pursuit.

BUT TWO SQUADRONS, EVEN TWO TROOPS, SAY A HUNDRED AND FIFTY MOUNTED RIFLEMEN, WOULD HAVE SAVED DELHI TO BRITAIN THAT NIGHT. NEITHER THE CAVALRY NOR THE INFANTRY OF THE SEPOYS COULD HAVE PREVENTED SUCH TROOPS FROM FORCING THEIR WAY THROUGH AND BEFORE THEM, INTO THE GATES OF THAT FORTRESS, AND EITHER TURNING OUT THE NATIVE GARRISON, TAKEN UNAWARES, OR HOLDING THE PALACE BY THEIR RIFLE-FIRE TILL THE 60TH RIFLES FROM MEERUT COULD HAVE REINFORCED THEM NEXT MORNING.



Of course there can be no blame attached to those present for not making use *of a power which did not then exist*, though a modification of it might have been

devised on the spot;* but this illustration is used to show how, under certain well-known circumstances of our Indian warfare, *which circumstances may be repeated any day hereafter*, the new power we advocate here would have changed the whole aspect of affairs to our advantage.

Let anyone attempt to calculate what millions of money and thousands of lives the presence of a couple of hundred Mounted Riflemen at Meerut that night would have saved! Mark, moreover, that the Mutiny of Vellore, in July 1806—just after Lake's time, when his lessons and precepts were recent in men's minds—was crushed out *in this very way*. Colonel Gillespie, with one squadron of the 19th Dragoons *and its 'galloper' gun*, rode to the spot at speed on the first alarm, burst in the gate; and his presence, with the fire of the remnant of the British garrison left alive—but disheartened and without a leader till then—saved the place, and nipped in the bud what would have been a widespread revolt. SPEED TO OVERCOME TIME OTHERWISE AND SPACE—FIRE TO DESTROY: THE WANT OF THIS COMBINATION IS AS URGENTLY FELT IN INDIA AT THIS TIME AS THEN.

ESCAPE OF THE NANA.

The second instance we shall quote, out of a score that we might bring forward—were it not that the object of doing so is liable to be misunderstood—occurred at the Raptee river on December 31, 1858, in the fight in which the portion of the Grand Army then under Lord Clyde's personal command, drove the Nana over the frontier of Oude into Nepalese territory.

On the evening of December 30, the head-quarters of

* It is said that a captain of the Sixth Carabineers volunteered—if allowed to take his own squadron, a troop of horse-artillery, and a couple of dozen of the 60th Rifles carried on the limbers and spare waggons of the guns—to intercept the mutineers, by getting before them to the bridge above spoken of; but that the attempt was considered too hazardous, and forbidden or discouraged accordingly.

the army—that had been engaged for a fortnight in driving the Nana, the Begum (the Queen-mother of Lucknow), some minor chiefs, and the 16,000 to 20,000 Sepoys and armed rabble still following their fortunes, successively from position to position towards the north of Oude, while two other forces, on the right and left, kept the rebels from breaking through the chain—was in camp at Nanparah, a town in the Baraitch district, about twenty-two miles south of the Raptee river, which here forms the boundary of Nepal. It was known that the Nana and his gang were somewhere in the immediate neighbourhood, though their exact whereabouts was not certain. About 4 P.M. on the 30th, some trusty spies came into camp with certain intelligence that he was in a village about sixteen miles north of us, and about five to seven miles south of the Raptee.

Here seemed an opportunity, by a skilful, secret, rapid stroke, for capturing this arch-villain and the other prime movers in the rebellion;—for ending our long-protracted operations with *eclât*, and crowning them with a brilliant success, that should raise our military prestige throughout India and the whole world. And, assuredly, the object possibly attainable was worth a considerable effort.

Accordingly, a surprise by night was determined on. Orders went round the camp, about 6 P.M., for a march at 8 P.M., the direction being kept a profound secret.

A little before 8 P.M. therefore, a force, consisting of about ten horsed-guns (six of them of a troop of Royal Horse Artillery), the 7th Hussars, the 6th Carabineers, about 1,200 excellent native horse (amongst them Hughes' splendid regiment of irregulars, the 1st Punjab Cavalry), one wing of the 20th Foot, the 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade, and a native battalion (the 1st Beloochees, natives of Scinde), assembled quietly on the ground in front of the camp; and, after orders enjoining the strictest

silence had been given, moved off into the thick darkness, following as a guiding-star a single lantern carried on the back of an elephant in charge of the Quartermaster-General's department. In order to enable the British infantry to keep up with the cavalry, they were mounted on elephants, five men to each elephant. BUT HERE CAME THE WEAKNESS OF THE WHOLE PLAN. AS THERE WERE ONLY ELEPHANTS ENOUGH IN CAMP TO CARRY *ONE-HALF* THE INFANTRY, THESE WERE ORDERED TO RIDE AND MARCH BY TURNS; that is, first one half rode for an hour, then the other half. Lord Clyde, suffering severely from the effects of a fall that had fractured his collar-bone four days before, accompanied the force; but, from his condition, the executive command chiefly devolved on the Chief of the Staff, Sir William Mansfield.

But either an oversight, or a breach of orders that could not be controlled, early threatened to mar the success of the whole plan. Doubtless some orders had been given about camp-followers. As the whole of the baggage was left in camp, the presence of any native not a soldier, except the water-carriers and bearers of the litters for wounded men, was absolutely unnecessary. The 'grasscutters' (native servants who attend all British and native cavalry in India, to gather forage for the horses) might have been left behind; or, at all events, been kept together under a guard of irregular horse, to follow a few hours later. Be this as it may, the force had not marched a quarter of an hour before its column was inundated on both flanks by crowds of native followers, screaming and shouting to their fellows, making a disturbance that might be heard a mile off. The British soldiers, according to order, preserved a dead silence; the native followers made night horrible with their yells. *And this was a march undertaken avowedly for a surprise.*

Contrast with this Lake's method. At page 134

Captain Thorn says that all followers were left behind with the baggage—hence one main cause of his complete success.

The distance to the village where the Nana lay was some sixteen or eighteen miles. Marching shortly after 8 P.M., the force, its main bulk *mounted*, naturally got over about fourteen miles by 3 A.M., in spite of all delays caused by darkness. And here came a halt and hesitation, that plainly showed one of two things; either that the distance to be gone over had been miscalculated, and we had marched too early, or that, just as the prize was almost within our fingers, ready and easy to be grasped by a bold push of three miles more, the risk of a night-attack had suddenly come to be considered too great to be attempted. The hazard of a fight in the dark, amongst lanes of low mud houses, with perhaps some loss of life, was apparently thought sufficient to overweigh all the advantages of pushing straight on. But if the troops were not brought out to make a night-surprise, or at all events a sudden dash with the first glimmering of dawn, they had better have been left to pass the night in their beds in camp.

Whatever may have been the cause, the force was now ordered to halt and lie down to wait for daylight, still keeping a profound silence. Discipline served to keep those 4,000 soldiers, white and black, as silent as the grave. Wrapped in their greatcoats, they lay on the ground, chilled to the bone by the intense cold of an Oude December night, yet making no sound above a whisper. But not so the irrepressible native camp-followers. They did not understand lying about, shivering in their thin cotton dress, waiting for sunrise. As they were under no semblance of control, first the thatch off the houses of a small village near at hand was pulled down, and lighted in bonfires to warm them; then, in a few minutes, the village itself was in a blaze, and made in

that pitch-darkness a vast lurid glare, that lighted up the horizon, and could be seen for miles. Here was at once an end to all hope of making a night-surprise; especially against so wary, restless, and double-dyed a villain as the Nana, who knew that his life was forfeit a dozen times over if he fell into our hands. Of course, from that moment, any expectation of catching our enemy sleeping was dashed to the ground.

The Nana's mounted scouts were all over the country. As we afterwards learnt, within a quarter of an hour of that bright blaze shooting up (probably about 4 A.M.) there was hasty booting and saddling in the village we were to *surprise*, and the Nana's thirty-five elephants were being hurriedly laden with the jewels and treasure, which alone gave him the means of holding together the diminished rebel following that still clung to his desperate fortunes.

Another three miles of steady tramp forward would have accomplished our object. If the British troops were too precious to be hazarded in the doubtful turns of a night-attack, amidst mud huts and narrow lanes, there were some two thousand Sikh and Afghan cavalry and excellent Belooch infantry present, only too eager to be entrusted with the task. Or, the cavalry might have made a wide circuit, passed beyond the village (our guides knew every stick and stone in the place), and encircled it at a safe distance till daylight. Not at all: that way might have done in 1803; it was thought too dangerous, and found no favour, in 1858.

We waited wearily till near 5 A.M. Day began to break shortly after. Then slowly and cautiously, with as much circumspection as if we might expect every moment to be fallen upon by ten times our numbers, the native cavalry were pushed out in a long line as feelers, and the force, kept carefully in hand, worked gradually forward.

The contrast was ludicrous in the extreme. First, the

unnecessary haste to get over the first fourteen miles; then the sudden caution that condemned us to lie for more than two hours on the ground, only three miles short of our mark; the strictly-kept silence of the troops on the one hand, and the frantic yells and blazing bonfires of the followers on the other, made a height of absurdity that no description can do justice to. Then the crawling forward, only when dawn brightened into day, in the vain hope to catch the most cunning, wily villain alive,—who had of course been riding as if for bare life for the last hour—showed a height of confidence almost pathetic in its touching simplicity.

But, though all hope of a surprise was past, there was still time to do a sharp stroke of work on some of our worst enemies. The force before us was, from its very nature, composed of all the most guilty as well as the most hardy and enduring of the slippery rebels we had been hunting for months. Every stroke delivered, every shot sent fairly home into their midst, might rid the British Government in India of a more than ordinarily dangerous enemy.

As day broke broadly, there was discerned a longish line of rebels of all arms, with several guns, posted amongst detached hovels, and round a central mud village in the plain, all perfectly prepared for us—probably some six or seven thousand in all. These, as it afterwards turned out, were a sort of rearguard placed to delay us, and cover the passage of the Nana and Begum, their heavily-laden elephants and their treasure, across the Raptee, now some four miles to the north.

It is necessary here to describe the ground in some detail. At about two miles behind the rebels now fronting us there stretched a thick forest, in one long line, unbroken as far as the eye could reach to right and left.

This was supposed to be the edge of the Terai jungle, a forest that clothes the foot of the Nepal mountains for



a mile or two into the plain. But as we knew that the Raptee river was not far off, and as it plainly did not lie between us and this jungle (the eye could see that at once), it naturally followed that it must be somewhere *beyond* the wood in our front, and that this wood could not therefore be of great depth. Here defective information appears to have existed at head-quarters, to furnish an additional cause of delay, and to help our opponent's escape. Our whole cavalry and artillery were now deployed in one long line, and pressed forward across the plain at a sharp trot; of course soon leaving the infantry far behind. The rebels made the merest show of resistance—exchanged a few rounds from their guns, which they then abandoned all but two that they carried off,—and fell back rapidly to the shelter of the forest. Coming sharply up to its edge in pursuit, the British cavalry were saluted with a galling fire of musketry and one or two cannon-shot, from its leafy depths. Here they were at once at fault, and pulled their horses up short.

From what has been said before, in the second chapter on Cavalry, the reader will not be surprised to hear that this was a contingency which our magnificent dragoons were neither prepared for, nor competent to deal with. To skirmish through the wood, and thus open a path for them on to the level plain beyond, was, according to our theory, the work of infantry; * and the infantry were full four miles behind.

The dragoons sat in their saddles, steadily but help-

* Our Cavalry Regulations contain instructions for dragoons to 'link their horses together' when required to skirmish on foot, and doubtless the theory is that they are as often practised in this as in any other part of their drill. But the popular prejudice we have alluded to before, that a dragoon's proper place is in the saddle, and his only weapon the sword, overrides these salutary directions, and renders them practically (as in the instance given above) a dead letter. Moreover the present dress of all our mounted soldiers is as ill-calculated for hard work on foot through bush-cover, as it would be for going aloft to reef topsails at sea.

lessly gazing at the dark forest in their front, from which came a fire by no means calculated to assist quiet meditation.

After some minutes of this hesitation, during which several men had been knocked out of their saddles and many horses hit, the cavalry and artillery were faced about by order, and retired out of musket-range. IT WAS NECESSARY TO WAIT FOR THE INFANTRY! MORE THAN AN HOUR WAS THUS LOST, THE REBELS OF COURSE PUSHING FOR THE FORDS OF THE RAPTEE ALL THE TIME. Then, when at last the dust-begrimed, sturdy, cheery Rifle Brigade came hurrying up, and dashed eagerly into the wood like a pack of hounds into cover, of course driving the rear of the rebels before them, the finding a path for the cavalry to follow was only the work of a few minutes. In breathless haste to retrieve their momentary check, and fearful lest the prize should have escaped them, the whole cavalry brigade immediately dashed along this path by sections of threes at a gallop.

The belt of wood proved to be not half a mile deep. Emerging from it there came to view a fine hard open plain, intersected by one or two ravines, but mainly capital galloping ground, stretching some two miles with a gentle slope down to the Raptee bank. The whole plain was covered with detached groups of Sepoys, both horse and foot; the infantry fast making for the river—the cavalry, relying on their speed for final escape, making play to delay us ('bahadooring,' as Indian phrase calls it), caracoling across our front, brandishing sword and lance. On a knoll on our left, as we cleared the wood and formed up in line, the striking figure of the Chief of the Staff at once took the eye—every line of his horse and his own thoughtful profile cut clear out against the sky—his arm outstretched as he pointed to his aides the course each body of cavalry was to take in pursuit to the fords, for which the enemy were hurrying.



The Carabineers diverged to the right, the 7th Hussars to the left; Hughes' Punjab Cavalry took a central course. Then followed the chase: first a measured canter, then a steady gallop, lastly a headlong rush to the river-bank.

But we were all too late. One hour earlier, and if we had not captured the Nana, as we might quite possibly have done, we should at least have had rare sabring at some of the deepest-dyed villains of the whole blood-stained Bengal Army. BUT THE DELAY AT THE WOOD HAD ROBBED US OF OUR PRIZE.

Probably not fifty men were cut down in crossing the plain. Hughes' cavalry found a gun abandoned on the very brink of the river, and were so close on the heels of the rebel sowars, that his leading troopers exchanged blows with them in the stream itself (here shallow with a hard bottom).

And now came a dramatic wind-up to our night's march, which the writer will never cease to remember. As we reached the bank of the river—not a hundred yards across—on the other side rose, hard and dark like a granite wall, the dense forest of the Terai, coming right down to the northern shore of the Raptee. As the last of the rebel mob clambered up the opposite bank before us, instantaneously, like the lifting of a drop-scene, with a simultaneous flash and roar, five or six guns opened as it were in our very faces. Fortunately they fired high: the first two rounds of grape flew wildly hurtling overhead; before the next we were trotting quietly to the rear out of fire.

The 7th Hussars, following still more closely on the heels of that body of the rebels which they pursued, rode into the Raptee *with* them. Not so fortunate as Hughes' men in finding the stream shallow, the horses of the leading squadron were in a moment floundering beyond their depth. Their gallant Major (Horne) and two hus-

sars were drowned, together with several horses. In an instant that hitherto compact body of eager resolute horsemen was scattered and dispersed; some regaining the bank in haste, some stopping to help out their comrades who could not swim.

The pursuit was at an end. There remained nothing to do but to collect the abandoned guns, fish what arms and accoutrements could be recovered out of the water, and return slowly to camp.

Never was there a more complete failure, as to any result worthy of being so called. The despatches, of course, announced triumphantly that the rebel Nana and the Begum, with all their horde, had been driven ignominiously across the Raptee into Nepal. Popular camp rumour—the 'wish the father to the thought'—added, where they *must* inevitably perish from starvation.

The fact of their being driven across the Raptee was indisputable. The inference drawn from it did not seem quite so clear to some, who reflected that, after all, the Nana had got safe off with all his baggage and treasure.

And, in fact, it took four months, after permission had been subsequently obtained from the Nepalese Government for our columns to cross their frontier, before the rebels that we followed that day could be brought to action and dispersed. Most of them doubtless got back safe, in small parties, after the amnesty was proclaimed, into our own territory, and will never cease to relate all over India their experience that, if an English force is terrible to meet in fight, it is laughably easy to evade. Moreover, to this day, thousands of the natives of India believe that the Nana is alive, and that he will some day appear again to head resistance against us.

It would not have been worth while to recur to this

action, insignificant in itself, had it not been that, probably, no event occurred throughout the campaigns of the Mutiny that brings out in more striking relief the feebleness of our present organisation for successfully pursuing (consequently for deterring) an Asiatic enemy, WHOSE STRONG POINT IS HIS SPEED IN FLIGHT. In this aspect the failure of December 31, 1858, is full of lessons of the gravest meaning and importance to the directors of our future Indian military organisation.

WHEN OUR CAVALRY WERE CHECKED BY THE WOOD, AND HAD TO WAIT OVER AN HOUR FOR THE RIFLE BRIGADE, OUR LAST CHANCE OF INFLICTING AN EFFECTIVE BLOW THAT DAY WAS GONE. MOREOVER, THAT ONE LOST HOUR, AND THE GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY IT ROBBED US OF, HAVE CHANGED FOR EVER THE WHOLE NATURE OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH THE GREAT SEPOY MUTINY WAS BROUGHT TO A CLOSE. THIS UNTOWARD ESCAPE DIMMED, FOR ALL TIME, THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE CHARACTERS IN WHICH THAT CLOSING EPISODE OF THE GREAT STRUGGLE MIGHT HAVE BEEN WRITTEN ON THE PAGE OF OUR INDIAN MILITARY HISTORY.

Probably no Englishman would have been individually much the happier if we had succeeded in catching the Nana, brought him to trial, and hanged him. But, as a matter of political and military prestige, the proof that we could *overtake* an enemy as well as beat him at any odds in the field, would have had a value it is impossible to calculate in its effect on the Indian mind.

WHAT CAUSED US TO LOSE THIS GREAT PRIZE? SIMPLY AND UNMISTAKABLY, THE TOTAL ABSENCE OF THE COMBINED POWER OF DESTRUCTIVE FIRE AND OF SPEED IN ONE, IN ANY TACTICAL BODY THAT WE POSSESS. THE DELAY AT THE WOOD —CAUSED WHOLLY BY THE FACT THAT OUR CAVALRY ARE NOT DRESSED, EQUIPPED, OR ARMED FOR EFFECTIVE SKIRMISHING ON FOOT—SNATCHED THIS GREAT ADVANTAGE FROM OUR GRASP. OF SUCH GREAT IMPORTANCE IN WAR IS THE TACTICAL EFFICIENCY AND COMPLETENESS IN ITSELF OF EACH ARMED

BODY WE EMPLOY. BUT 100 MOUNTED RIFLEMEN WOULD HAVE CHANGED THE WHOLE FATE OF THE DAY. INSTANTLY ON THEIR ARRIVAL AT THE EDGE OF THE WOOD, THEY WOULD HAVE DISMOUNTED AND SKIRMISHED THROUGH; THE WHOLE CAVALRY BRIGADE WOULD HAVE FOLLOWED THEM WITHOUT A MOMENT'S DELAY; and December 31, 1858, would have remained for ever marked in the Asiatic mind, as the day on which the impossibility of escape from British vengeance received its most successful and memorable illustration.

Contrast this signal failure with Lake's complete success at Furruckabad (page 135), under immensely greater difficulties of distance between him and his object; compare the solid advantages he gained, with the total absence of results in 1858; and then judge deliberately, WHETHER THIS QUESTION OF AN INCREASED AND CAREFULLY-ORGANISED SYSTEMATIC SPEED FOR OUR INDIAN FORCES IS A MERE TACTICAL ONE, OR, AS WE HAVE PRONOUNCED IT TO BE, ONE ON WHICH SOME OF THE GRAVEST CONSIDERATIONS OF OUR EASTERN POLICY MATERIALLY DEPEND?

We undertook (at page 120) to endeavour to prove, as far as such a matter is capable of proof, that 50,000 to 53,000 men would, under the altered system suggested in these pages, amply suffice for the military tenure of India.

Such a proposition, of course, only admits of proof by inference. But, as far as the past gives us any assurance for the future, surely the facts we have brought forward bear out this assumption.

To sum up:—In 1803–6, 55,000 troops—only 10,000 of them British—served for the conquest of India. In 1817–19, 116,000 men—only 13,200 of them British—accomplished the entire and final overthrow of the

Mahratta Powers. In both these cases the extent of the area fought over was almost identically the same as that we had to deal with in 1857–9 (with the exception of the Punjab and Scinde, both of which remained undisturbed by the Sepoy Mutiny); and the forces opposed to us in the two previous struggles were of about the same if not superior strength to those we met in 1857.

In 1857, the remnants of 45,000 British—whom surprise, exposure to climate at the most deadly season, and incalculable odds of material circumstance accumulated against them (such odds as never can be repeated, unless we as a nation are smitten with judicial blindness) had probably reduced to some 35,000 effectives—had everywhere succeeded by the end of September in holding their own. The tide had fairly turned in our favour. It wanted but a reinforcement of some 10,000, or at most 15,000, more fresh Britons to have re-established our supremacy—under the mode of dealing with our enemy till then in vogue—at every point.

But the experiment of how *few* additional troops would have sufficed for this work was destined never to be tried. Unlike the years from 1803 to 1805—when the bulk of our strength was wanted to guard our own homes, when all England looked with daily-increasing apprehension to the opposite heights of Boulogne, white with the tents of the self-styled 'Army of Invasion,' till Nelson and Trafalgar delivered us at one stroke from that nightmare,—1857 found us at peace with all the world, and able to devote our undivided strength to the great task of bringing revolted India again under control. In the thrill of horror and indignation that went through the land, at the first tidings of the bloody deeds of our pampered mercenaries, all other considerations became secondary to the one of stamping out rebellion effectively; economy of means never entered into the consideration.

There was no hesitation, no demur at any demand—no time for critical examination.

The voice that called for men enough to make the British troops in India up to 80,000, would equally have been responded to had it asked for 30,000 more, or even double that number.

And this was a matter in which, rightly, the nation would exercise no thrift. It chose the best man it could find to meet the military emergency, and, rightly, it left it entirely to him to specify the means he considered necessary for his task.

With his arrival, as we have shown, a new system of movement was inaugurated; which system, although it will always be open to question whether it was the best, undoubtedly so acted as to make the whole number of troops disposable an absolute necessity.

And as in less than six months after this new system (hitherto unknown in India in dealing with Asiatics, and wholly unsuited to the special requirements of the case) was inaugurated, the native resistance—weakened by the loss of their strongholds, by the natural exhaustion of munitions of war, which they could not replace,* and of men whom no system of reserves replenished—entered upon a phase to cope with which this system was totally inadequate,—the old Pindaree method, the phase of 'running fight,'—each succeeding month through which the weary indecisive operations spun themselves out, seemed but a fresh proof of the justness and correctness of the demand for that large number.

Therefore it will be for ever out of the reach of actual

* Towards the close of 1858 the mutinied Sepoys began to run very short of percussion-caps, which, as no native understood the manufacture, they could not replace. Many substitutes were tried, but eventually so great did this scarcity become, that many good percussion arms had to be turned into flint-locks and matchlocks, there being no other means of using them. The same occurred, of course, with their great-gun ammunition, and especially with shells, which they had no means of replacing, after those that fell into their hands in the arsenal at Delhi, and the magazines at Cawnpore and Futtegurh, were once exhausted.

demonstration, how *small* a number of troops would have sufficed us in that crisis.

But the fact most important clearly to be noted is, that the point at which our organisation failed to cope speedily with the work that lay before it, *was just that where its old defect* OF WANT OF SPEED FOR CONTINUED PURSUIT *began to tell*; *and that this defect eventually neutralised the immense numbers employed.*

This long-drawn delay of the final success no doubt mainly accounts, moreover, for the readiness with which the Royal Commission of 1859 fell into the belief that 73,000 British ought to be the *permanent* garrison of India. For had it not before it the hard fact that fully that number of men, handled in what was presumably the best manner, unquestionably by the soldier whom public opinion at the time named as the fittest for the task, had required nearly two years, after they had got fairly to their work, to finish completely what had in the beginning appeared not too arduous for the survivors of 45,000?

It was no part of its office to enquire whether the work might have been done with less, but simply to fix what would be the safe standard to be observed for the future.

Naturally, therefore, it adopted the idea that about the same number of troops that had been required to suppress the Mutiny would be necessary to prevent a recurrence.

Thus, then, the expense that India has been put to, of maintaining 73,000 men annually since 1859, is a direct consequence of, and a legacy bequeathed to it by, the military policy of that and the preceding year. THAT MILITARY POLICY OWED ITS WEAKNESS, AS HAS BEEN SHOWN, MAINLY TO THE TACTICAL DEFECT OF THE ABSENCE, IN ANY ONE ARMED BODY THAT WE POSSESS, OF THE DOUBLE QUALITY OF SPEED AND DESTROYING POWER.

As we have related, two forces infinitely smaller conquered India in 1806 and in 1818; what were left of 45,000 British in 1857 sufficed to *hold* it in spite of every drawback.

Hence it is not an unreasonable inference, that a very small addition to that number would have sufficed to complete the work in 1859, had it not been for the special causes referred to above.

It is certainly not too much to assume, therefore, that 53,000 men—OF WHOM 14,000 SHOULD, BY A COMBINATION OF SPEED NEARLY DOUBLED, AND OF FIRE QUITE QUADRUPLED, BE MADE FULLY EQUAL TO 30,000 ORDINARY INFANTRY—would meet all our wants there; especially when we consider that the means of offence of our enemies have been simultaneously reduced by at least one-half.

To be on the safe side in 1858–59, when no other demand called for our troops elsewhere, was the best and the soundest policy. To continue that gigantic expense, in face of existing and increasing armaments all over the world, any longer than it is proved to be absolutely necessary, is wantonly to sacrifice the best interests of both England and India.

The great American War has given us the key to a safe and economical military system, by the adoption and adaptation to our own peculiar case of the means proved to be so effectual there—the systematic use of Mounted Infantry. We shall be wrong if we do not grasp the many advantages this great lesson holds out to us.

But it will be objected, 'What need for a new organisation when we have railways now running in India to the extent of some 5,000 miles, and increasing their lines daily? Surely these must make our infantry doubly effective.'

True, they do make them doubly and threefold efficient *along certain lines; but only in those directions—and nowhere else.*

Put down at ten miles from a railway station, the fastest-moving portion of our army is at once reduced to its old twenty miles a day. We have main lines connecting Calcutta and Delhi, Lahore and Umritsur—and almost connecting the three Presidencies with each other. BUT IS IT TO BE SUPPOSED THAT, IN CASE OF FUTURE INSURRECTION, OUR ENEMIES WILL BE ACCOMMODATING ENOUGH TO FIGHT US ALONG OUR RAILWAY LINES, *even supposing they leave those lines unmolested?*

The experience of the American War shows how constantly their railways were torn up, and all passage intercepted, by swiftly-moving bodies of cavalry.

And the rapid irruption and equally rapid evasion of such bands of marauding horse is the *one* distinguishing feature of the warfare we have to meet in India.

Again, what is to aid our infantry in getting rapidly over the hundreds of thousands of square miles where no rail has penetrated, or *can*, in the ordinary course of things, penetrate for years to come?

Pursuit after Tantia Topee in 1859.

Take, for instance, the district which was the scene of the exploits—not of fighting, but of successful running away—of the Mahratta Tantia Topee, in 1858–59. His doublings and wanderings—which, to be brief, kept some 30,000 British and native troops under arms, and exposed to climate under canvass, for over ten months—were limited to a small tract, of about 148,000 square miles, in Rajpootana and Malwa, the very heart of India. His wretched following never exceeded 10,000 rabble; at times it dwindled down, after a brush with one of our pursuing columns, to two or three thousand. Yet, by superior speed and slipperiness, he managed to keep the game afoot from June 1858 to April 1859! Our troops —instead of following the precedent of Lake's times, and

His wretched handful of rabble keep some 30,000 troops under tents for ten months.

continuously pursuing, with a light force always on his heels, till they fairly ran him to earth—were divided into fifteen or sixteen columns, placed round the circumference of the circle of which he occupied the centre. Though their exertions in pursuit were almost incredible —(Captain Clowes' troop of the 8th Hussars is said to have marched 2,400 miles in this chase)—Tantia always contrived to keep ahead of them, slipped past the head of one column after another, and baffled the whole. He finally managed successfully to evade all the efforts of our troops to capture him, and eventually only fell into our hands through the treachery of a brother rebel, one Mân Singh, who (either tempted by the reward, or to make his own peace with us), volunteered to lead a small party of native infantry by night to the place where Tantia was sleeping in fancied security, and thus seized and bound him before he was well awake. LET ANYONE UNDERTAKE TO CALCULATE THE COST, IN LOSS OF REVENUE *ALONE* TO GOVERNMENT OVER THIS AND NEIGHBOURING DISTRICTS, WHILE THIS CHASE WAS GOING ON; TO SAY NOTHING OF THE HUNDREDS OF LIVES SHORTENED, AND OF VALUABLE CONSTITUTIONS OF ENGLISH SOLDIERS RUINED, BY THE LONG-PROTRACTED EXPOSURE TO SUN, AND THE HARDSHIPS OF THIS FRUITLESS PURSUIT FOR SO MANY MONTHS. Anyone who wishes to follow it, through its almost interminable details of successful evasion on Tantia's side, and of wasted because misapplied toil and labour on ours, will find a most instructive and interesting account in the 'United Service Institution's Journal' for August 1860.

AS TO THE MILITARY AID WE DERIVE FROM OUR RAILWAYS IN INDIA, IT IS SUFFICIENT TO SAY THAT THIS DISTRICT OF WHICH WE HAVE JUST SPOKEN IS NOT PENETRATED BY ONE MILE OF RAIL IN WORKING ORDER YET—SEVEN YEARS AFTER.* So that, suppose a similar freebooter to arise

* One branch of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway is intended to *skirt*

there to-morrow, there is no reason why he should not play the same comparatively successful game of murder, rapine, and evasion, with equal impunity for the same time; *for we have no better-organised system of rapid pursuit now than then.* **AND THIS IS ONLY ONE PARTIAL ILLUSTRATION OF A TRUTH THAT EQUALLY APPLIES TO NEARLY THE WHOLE CONTINENT OF INDIA, AS TO THE BROAD AND WELL-DEFINED LINE BEYOND WHICH RAILWAYS CAN RENDER US NO ASSISTANCE IN WAR OR INSURRECTION IN THAT COUNTRY.**

How long shall we have to wait, at this rate of railway progress, before we can afford, on our present system, to reduce our Indian garrison by 20,000 men?

Moreover recent events, both in America and in Germany, have now plainly shown that there is a limit—very soon reached—beyond which railways play no part in giving troops increased speed of movement. For instance, they can only be made use of *behind* and under cover of the protection of troops advanced *in front of them. Behind* an army, as long as it is so placed as to protect them from being cut in upon by flank attacks, they will be invaluable in forwarding rapidly its reinforcements, supplies, and stores. But not one inch of *forward* progress will they enable an army to make *towards* its enemy, except at the ordinary marching rate of infantry or cavalry. They will prevent the numerous delays that in former days the waiting for all its encumbrances entailed upon an army; but its forward progress is not hastened by them, and must still be confined to the twenty odd miles a day that it can march on foot.

Thus the famous march of 440 miles, which brought

through a portion of this district; but not a mile of this part is open for traffic yet, though it may be some time in 1867–68. But, when it *is* finished, it will only *border* this district, not completely traverse it. The same remark applies, with equal force, to the vast and turbulent country of the Nizam, having its capital at Hyderabad, in the Deccan.

the Prussian army after the victory of Königgrätz to the plains of the Marchfeld before Vienna, was made in twenty-two days, or at an average rate of twenty miles a day. Doubtless the railways—of which it secured the use as it advanced, and which its numerous and perfectly-organised trains of artificers enabled it immediately to repair—saved it countless delays and stoppages, by keeping its heavy stores, &c. up with it as it moved.

BUT THEY DID NOT MAKE THAT ADVANCE ITSELF ANY QUICKER THAN IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN DONE UPON FOOT.

Therefore, by the simple expedient of keeping off, and at a distance, from our lines of rails—no difficult matter, considering how few and far between they still are—our Indian enemies may still, as of old, retain their superior speed, unless our system of Railways is supplemented by a system of Mounted Infantry.

With a force of this sort, however, established as a recognised part of our Indian Army, our railways themselves would at once acquire a twofold value and security for military purposes; **FOR EACH OF THESE TWO MODES OF MULTIPLYING SPEED OF MOVEMENT WOULD HENCEFORTH ACT, MATHEMATICALLY SPEAKING, AS THE *COMPLEMENT* OF THE OTHER.**

A portion of the Mounted Riflemen would, by constant patrolling, keep the railways intact from being torn up—a duty which neither British Infantry nor Native Cavalry could perform equally well.

Again, the railways would help to forward the Mounted Riflemen, horses and all, rapidly to the point from which (the rails being there ended) their own special movement of thirty miles a day would begin. Each branch of force would thus help the other. But *without* Mounted Riflemen, a widespread system of railways not being capable of being properly guarded, might prove a delusion and a snare rather than an aid in military operations against *insurrection*; the dangers of which, unlike those of

regular war, which can generally be confronted in a determined direction, are often behind, on both flanks of, and all around an army at one and the same time.

ON THE OTHER HAND, THE ADOPTION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF MOUNTED RIFLEMEN FOR INDIA WOULD DO AWAY IMMEDIATELY WITH ALL OUR DIFFICULTIES ON THIS HEAD; FOR IT IS UNIVERSALLY APPLICABLE TO EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE OF WAR, OR TO ANY SORT OF COUNTRY.

Fifteen battalions of 526 men each (total 7,890, exclusive of officers) would make that vast country, with all its turbulent populations, as safe as the county of Middlesex, and would allow from 15,000 to 20,000 of our infantry to be brought away;—partly in fifteen Line battalions, withdrawn without relief; partly by individual men, to be brought home and passed into the Reserve.

When we say the fifteen Line battalions withdrawn would be brought home 'without relief,' we do not fully express our meaning. They would be withdrawn without being replaced by a similar number of Line regiments from home; but each battalion withdrawn (say of 900 men) would be replaced by a battalion of Mounted Riflemen of scarcely more than half its strength—that is, of some 526 non-commissioned officers and men, to be raised on the spot in India.

These battalions of Mounted Riflemen would be formed by a process that has been in use in India for the greater part of the last century. As each regiment of the Line completes its term of Indian service, and is about to embark for home, a notice is issued calling for men to volunteer from it to the regiments remaining. The number thus transferring their services in order to remain has generally been a full third of each battalion, sometimes more than half. Till the Mounted Rifles had got their full numbers, it would be merely necessary to restrict the volunteering to them only; and the slightly increased

pay that cavalry soldiers receive would probably be quite sufficient inducement to fill the ranks of what ought to become a most popular branch of the service.

Thus there would be no diminution in the *number of our British battalions in the country* perceptible to the native observer. The decreased total force *in men* would entirely escape the natives' attention, except perhaps that they would notice that we had nearly twice as many *mounted* corps as before. To a native of India a 'pultun' (his word for 'battalion') is *always* a pultun, whether it consists of 300 or 800 men. He rarely attempts to estimate numbers, and when he does, generally makes the wildest mistakes. Thus the change, extending gradually over two years, would wholly escape Indian notice, except in so far as it would become apparent to their minds, that we had twice as many *horsemen* in the country as before, and that these horsemen's rifles could reach as far, and yet fire four times as many shots in the minute, as the Enfield. Before two years the Asiatic—the more intelligent the better for our purpose of impressing his mind—would awake to the fact that, in spite of some soldiers having gone out of the country, we now possessed a force, whom not only was it hopeless to contend against in the open field, BUT WHOM NO AMOUNT OF SWIFTNESS IN FLIGHT WOULD ENABLE HIM TO EVADE: THAT, HIDE HIMSELF IN WHAT REMOTE JUNGLE OR FASTNESS HE MIGHT, THOSE DEADLY BREECHLOADERS, CARRIED BY MEN MOUNTED UPON HORSES CAPABLE OF DOING THIRTY MILES A DAY FOR WEEKS TOGETHER, MUST SEARCH HIM OUT AND BRING HIM TO BAY.

There is another matter which, though not a part of our subject, has so strong and direct a bearing upon it, that we cannot refrain from briefly touching it here.

One principal reason, if not the main one, why 73,000 British soldiers are considered necessary in India, is be-

cause it is manifestly requisite to have a strong counterpoise to the vast Native Army we maintain there.

The danger we encountered in 1857 arose almost entirely from this one cause. Had there not been so gigantic a Native Army, there would have been no revolt. No amount of political disaffection could have united the other classes of the population against us; nor, even had they so united, would they have had the arms and means of dangerous offence, if our blind system had not put them abundantly, nay invitingly, into their hands.

This Native Army has been since reduced from 280,000 down to 135,000 men in the three Presidencies.

BUT IS IT AT ALL PROVED THAT WE HAVE ANY NEED FOR ANYTHING LIKE THE NUMBER STILL REMAINING? WOULD NOT 80,000 ANSWER OUR PURPOSES JUST AS WELL, AND LEAVE US INFINITELY SAFER?

Have we in any way missed, or felt the want of, any of the 145,000 mercenaries we have already parted with—100,000 of whom so liberally and effectually discharged themselves in 1857, and the rest of whom we have found it wise to dispense with since?

We think no man who does not look at the question with the eyes of one brought up in long years of reverence and regard for Bengal Sepoys, and all their 'gentlemanly' but utterly worthless surroundings, can be in any doubt as to the answer to these questions.

India will remain for long years to come a land in which, in spite of all we can do to the contrary, soldiers are to be had, at a few days' notice, in any number of thousands that may be called for. We need not be at such elaborate pains to keep up the supply.

In the pre-Mutiny times there was, if not a sound reason, at all events a very plausible one, to be given for the maintenance of numerous native troops.

The Native Armies of the three Presidencies were—to use a phrase thoroughly appropriate here, though it has

been much misapplied elsewhere—'a gigantic system of outdoor relief.' As a vast political machine, they had what *appeared* to be a very important end in view. Maintaining more than a quarter of a million of grown men, in the prime and vigour of life, in a popular and honourable vocation, they moreover supported, through life-pensions to bygone generations of discharged soldiers, and through the wives and families of those still serving, at least a full million of men, women, and children in comfort, reputation, and ease.

And this, *if only it answered its purpose*, was a sound and wise policy, because, it gave that number of subjects of the Crown a direct personal interest in the maintenance of our rule.

But what did the ties of gratitude for favours continued through twenty generations, and to be held at pleasure in the future, avail England the paymaster and benefactor, in the day when a great temptation arose to place the interests of these thousands of pampered mercenaries in supposed opposition to our own?

Before the greater attraction of the hope of exercising supreme power apparently placed within their grasp,—of enjoying the plunder, license, and unrestrained idleness so dear to the Asiatic heart—all the humbler but more solid advantages of our rule had no weight, and were brushed away like chaff before the wind.

Clearly, as a political means of conciliating a nation to our rule, great native armies have been found wanting in the balance, and are of no avail whatever.

Again, in a strictly military sense, their value, in great numbers, was at the best a very questionable one, at all events in the later days of our rule. In the times of Clive, even down to those of Lake, the very small force of British we could spare to India from our gigantic European wars made it an absolute necessity that they should be supplemented largely by natives, to prevent

our handful being literally swallowed up, in combat with Indian Powers, by the mere inert weight of numbers. But this necessity has now long ceased to exist.

Let the casualty lists of all our Indian battles be examined—for these are tests that do not flatter, although our general officers of European reputation (Gough, Napier, and Clyde) felt themselves bound to do so, even while they blushed in uttering the ill-deserved praises of the Sepoy, which 'the system' extorted from them:—it will be seen that, invariably, all the brunt of the fighting has been borne by our British soldiers, who have generally lost, in killed and wounded, as three to one of their native comrades, *even when the numbers of the latter have exceeded theirs in the same or even a greater proportion.*

Their military value has never of late years been such as to repay their employment in large numbers, if it had not been for the political consideration given above.

Except in *one* respect—and in touching on this we have the *only* real argument in favour of a native army.

The climate, that is so deadly to our countrymen, is naturally almost harmless to natives.

And this gives us, at once, the real measure of the necessity for their employment. We want sufficient native soldiers, to save our costly and dearly-to-be-replaced Britons from exposure to the sun, whenever it can be avoided by substituting them; and to take a vast quantity of night-duty on sentry, which, always harassing, is doubly so to the European constitution in the tropics.

Let us have, then, just sufficient native troops to save our men from unnecessary exposure to climate, *and no more*; for every additional native soldier we keep up in excess of these requirements is an unnecessary and wanton danger to the State.

And certainly, from this point of view, the number we still keep might, with infinite advantage, be reduced by one-third, if not by one-half.

'India has been won by the sword,' and must, however we may strive to disguise the fact, be held by the sword, till that happy day arrives when good government and mutual confidence shall have made the interests of both races clearly identical.

But, while awaiting that much-to-be-desired time, surely we have had lessons enough, written in letters of blood, to teach us that the sword which we wield *should be held by British and not by native hands.*

Let us look for a moment at what our neighbours the French—who certainly have established a reputation for knowing what they are about in regard to things military —do under somewhat similar circumstances.

In their colony of Algeria, placed not at six weeks' but three days' steam from their own doors, to control some three millions of Arabs, they maintain except at times when war elsewhere causes it to be largely deducted from, an army of some 65,000 to 70,000 men.

But what proportion of these do the Turcos and Spahis, of whom we heard so much in the Italian campaign, form?

Three regiments of Arab Spahis, of 900 horses each, —three regiments of African Tirailleurs Indigénes, of three battalions each,—a sum-total of some 3,000 cavalry and 7,200 infantry (grand total, 10,200 natives), make up the whole number; or in the proportion of one native African to six Frenchmen!

While we, on the contrary, before the Mutiny, had about *eight* Hindoos and Mahometans under arms to each British soldier in India; *and still, to this day, let the native soldiers outnumber our men in the proportion of two to one!*

The French *use* their native auxiliaries (and plenty of hard work they take care to get out of them); we let them accumulate, with no military or political necessity to call for it, till they are no longer a safeguard, but a



wantonly ruinous expense, if not an actual danger, to the State.

The last excuse for large Indian armies was destroyed when railways allowed the vast treasure escorts of other days—always given by natives, and sometimes requiring as many as two battalions of sepoys and a regiment of irregular cavalry at a time—to be entirely done away with. Such treasure as is now moved is sent by rail, and an improved currency has greatly reduced the quantity requiring transport.

Unquestionably, India would be safer to-morrow with 80,000 native soldiers than with 135,000, to say nothing of the reduction of the British force that this would permit. What do we want with more? Our mission and duty in India is to humanise her people, and to encourage and foster the arts of civilisation, industry, and peace—not to perpetuate, needlessly, the barbaric love of war and bloodshed, that has marred her wellbeing for so many centuries.

The first and securest foundation of any Government is, that it shall make itself respected and beloved.

Second to this, in a purely military sense, our greatest safeguard in India would be:—

First.—A general, searching, and often-renewed disarming of the people, rigidly enforced.

Secondly.—The reduction of the Native Army to the lowest figure consistent with its performance of those duties in which it can effectually assist us, by saving our British soldiers from exposure to sun and to the night-dew.

Thirdly.—An organised system, that should give the greatest possible mobility and continuous speed to the comparatively small number of British troops that would be necessary there, *after* these two measures had been carried out.

Clearly and manifestly then, from all that has gone before, Mounted Riflemen are the one great military necessity for India.

Railways will not help us to the increased speed we require to cope with our slippery Asiatic enemies, because this speed may, most probably *will*, have to be applied in directions and over districts where railways cannot penetrate for long years to come.

But with 8,200 Mounted Rifles (including officers), with the 6,000 British Cavalry we have in India armed and carefully trained to use breechloaders (not carbines, but 1,000-yard-range rifles), together with 1,000 Horse Artillery—this whole rapidly moveable force to be supplemented by the 20,000 Native Cavalry we keep in the three Presidencies, and who are invaluable as an adjunct, as long as they are kept in their proper places by carrying only smooth-bored arms,—India ought to be as free from danger of insurrection as any agricultural county in England. With telegraphs everywhere to flash the first news of disturbance, and troops of this sort ready to hasten to the spot at the uniform rate of thirty to thirty-five miles a day, we may laugh at disaffection, and think of rebellion only as a vanished bugbear of the past.

Moreover, as a means of giving a popular employment to the many officers of the late Company's Army, for whom no fitting places could be found in the new Amalgamation, and who are now kept year after year in the sort of military purgatory called 'doing general duty,' the establishment of these battalions of Mounted Rifles would be a special boon; offering them a career sufficiently local to India to meet their wishes, and at the same time more remunerative (on account of the difference between cavalry and infantry pay) than 'doing duty' with the infantry of the Line.

It has been stated in the papers some time back, that

officers have proceeded to India, under the orders of the Secretary of State, to report on the means by which the existing machinery in our factories there may be adapted to the conversion of the many thousand Enfield rifles into Snider breechloaders on the spot. The *first* rifles thus turned out ought to be placed in the hands of the British Cavalry in India; for carried by them, as having the greater speed, they would be doubly as useful as with the Infantry, whom no amount of increase in the efficiency of their arms *alone* will make more effective for Indian war, until we *first* give them the means of more rapid locomotion. FOR THEY MUST *OVERTAKE* THEIR ACTIVE FOE BEFORE THEIR ARMS CAN TELL UPON HIM.

The gradual successive stages by which the reduction we have contemplated might be carried out, without giving rise to any feeling of our having weakened our hold on India, would be as follows:—

First.—Arm all the Cavalry there with breechloaders, and send out instructions for their being at once trained to work upon foot, on emergency.

Second.—Order, at once, the purchase of the 8,200 additional horses required, in the markets of Australia, the Cape, and the Persian Gulf—specifying that they are to be delivered in India by October 1867. The Indian studs would probably furnish about 1,500 or 2,000 of these horses.

Third.—Announce throughout India to those concerned, that an Army of Reserve is to be formed at home; and offer a transfer to it, under bond of serving in it for the remainder of twenty-one years, to men chosen for good character and efficiency, out of those who are about to complete their limited service of ten years, in this and next year—thus making transfer to the Reserve the means of shortening their Line service by from eighteen months to one year.

This boon would thus be restricted solely to men the most eligible in all respects to form the nucleus of our Reserve system at home. Limit this transfer to the Reserve for this year to from 8,000 to 10,000 men, to take effect next autumn; the men leaving India at the usual season, October and November, and reaching England in March and April 1868.

These men to be chosen by tens and twenties throughout the whole army serving there; so that the number of battalions, squadrons, and batteries would remain undiminished, and therefore no alarm be excited.

By the time these men left India—viz., November 1867—the Cavalry would be fully armed and trained with breechloaders; thus quite *trebling* their efficiency, and much more than compensating for the number withdrawn.

Fourth.—Give notice that the number of battalions leaving India in the end of 1867 would be ten, instead of five (the usual annual relief); but that, from the men volunteering to remain in India, ten small battalions of Mounted Riflemen would be formed.

The horses and arms would be ready and available by that time; and by contemplating the measure thus long beforehand, all subsidiary arrangements would be complete, so that the men could join their new battalions without delay.

Fifth.—Let the five battalions coming home in November 1868, transfer their volunteers in like manner to five more Mounted Rifle Corps; and the whole change would then be complete, without ever, at any one time during the transition, having left a weak point for disaffection to take advantage of.

Sixth.—If the fifteen Mounted Rifle battalions were located in India somewhat as suggested by the subjoined list of stations * (one at each), a reference to any map

* Peshawur, Jhelum, Lahore, for the Punjab; Meerut, Bareilly, Fyzabad, and Lucknow, for Oude; Benares, Gwalior, Saugor, and Indore, for Central

will show that there is not any one spot in the four provinces, in which disturbance is most likely to occur, on which three of the battalions could not be concentrated within one week, or ten days at farthest.

Supposing these three battalions to give an effective strength for the field of only 1,200 men, recollecting that breechloaders multiply their fire by four, their effect will be equal to that of 4,800 of our present muzzle-loading Line infantry, who moreover, under existing circumstances, could certainly not be thus concentrated—railways notwithstanding—under a month. In fact, this system would give us the means of nipping disturbance in its very bud, by opposing to it, within 168 hours of its outbreak, as great a body of fire as two whole brigades of British infantry could give under the present system; and this without taking into consideration that the greater tactical rapidity of movement for manœuvre of mounted men, *after* they have reached their place of action at least doubles the effect by doubling the *power of application* of their fire.

It is not being too sanguine to anticipate that when once this system became domesticated in India, and the immensely increased strength it would give had come to be universally felt and acknowledged, even a considerably smaller number of British infantry than the 26,800 spoken of at page 36, would be found sufficient for all our wants.

All criticism that fails to suggest a remedy for the faults it professes to see, lays itself open to the grave charge of needlessly condemning what it cannot amend.

But the proposals here made would, it is firmly believed, more than fulfil the end in view.

India; Ahmednuggur, Secunderabad, Bellary, and Bangalore, for the Deccan—fifteen in all.

We are now evidently only at the beginning of a new era in the art of war—one in which new modes of applying the old principles will give incalculable advantages to that nation which shall have the foresight and the readiness of resource first to secure them for itself. The late Bohemian war is a striking instance of what such readiness did for Prussia. Are we to reap no benefit from the lesson? The great principles of strategy will, as ever, remain invariably the same; it is only in tactics that we can alter, modify, and improve.

Thus the change of system these pages advocate is essentially a tactical one; but it has, from our peculiar circumstances in India, and from the important bearing that our tenure of India has on our whole military system, a special weight, breadth of application, and forcible significance for us English, removing it far from the comparatively low level of mere tactics into the higher fields of politics and statecraft.

It gives us the means of making our possession of India no longer a weakness, but a source of vastly increased strength to our military position in the world. It will give us speedily, and without additional cost, a Reserve Force at home, which, steadily increasing year by year, would not only place us at once beyond the reach of those discreditable panics which we have undergone since 1847, but would immediately alter our standing and repute in diplomacy abroad.

The great Volunteer Movement of 1859 has done much to secure us peace on our own shores, but it does not avail us much abroad. A reserve of from 80,000 to 100,000 old trained soldiers, ready at twenty-four hours' notice to double our active Foreign Service Army, would wholly change the tone with which foreign statesmen now respond to England's suggestions on matters of European policy.

No longer should we find ourselves in the painful and

invidious position of 1864—feeling that, if the advice we tendered (as in the case of Denmark), was rejected with ill-concealed contempt, we were powerless to make it respected by our acts. Henceforth we need not fear the taunt that we are ready to bark where we dare not or cannot bite.

Moreover, the same change that secured for us such increased respect in Europe, would give us, at last, a satisfactory solution to the long-vexed question how our secure tenure of India may be made compatible with increased prosperity and wellbeing to the teeming millions there placed under British rule.

At present their advancement in all that goes to make up civilisation—in social position, in domestic comfort, in increased commerce, in means of communication, in improved and more widely-spread education and enlightenment—is hampered and hindered by the stern unceasing demands of a gigantic military expenditure.

The means of reducing this expenditure—of preventing, by increased irrigation and facility of communication, the recurrence of such a dire calamity as that awful famine which it is now known has swept off a full million of her inhabitants—are held out to us by the same discovery that gives us the opportunity of doubling the security of the grasp in which we hold that splendid, but as yet only half-developed, dependency of the Crown.

Thus in the Allwise Design that rules the universe—that beneficently couples some immediate reward with the performance of plain unmistakable duty—a more diligent enquiry thoughtfully to devise a military system that is really adapted to the local peculiarities of India, and which by relieving her burdened resources shall give increased prosperity to her people, will be recompensed by an immediate increase to the security, prosperity, and honour of England's proud position among nations.

No longer employing a sledgehammer to kill a butterfly—for by no other simile can the wanton waste of power we now permanently keep in India be so aptly described—we should henceforth have a military system which is pointed out as being thoroughly adapted to India's special needs by a historical review of our former Eastern wars; by regard to the nature, geographical position, and climate of the country; and by the singular speed in evasion, which forms the distinctive feature of that peculiar mode of warfare which has been handed down to her people by the traditions of centuries.

The main bulk of England's military strength would thenceforth be reserved for enemies more worthy of its power.

India would be held by a British force comparatively small, but thoroughly efficient because possessing a speed of movement carefully adapted to its special requirements; the tremendous drain on her exchequer would be relieved, and countless thousands be henceforth conciliated to our beneficent rule, by the increased advancement thus brought within their reach.

India would be made more content, England more respected and secure. If we now permit antiquated prejudice, blind routine, or selfish apathy to cause us to miss our golden opportunity; if we fail to grasp readily the great and solid benefits held out to us by an enlightened application of recently discovered improvements in arms, we shall prove ourselves behind the spirit of progress that, in war as in peace, marks the advance of the age.

Let thinking men calmly examine this question for themselves—not, as heretofore, trusting themselves blindfold to the few who claim, often on no sounder grounds than their possession of views narrowed and darkened by a lifelong subordination to antiquated prejudices, to have a prescriptive right to speak as oracles on this matter.

These are, almost without exception, interested in praising and endeavouring to maintain the old system, so singularly fruitless of results, except the unsatisfactory one of a gigantic expenditure.

When once this great question is looked at with the broad views of plain common-sense, there is no fear but that we shall soon come to a sound conclusion; and that henceforth England's duty to India, as well as that of her constant preparedness at home for the turn that affairs may any day take abroad, will be performed with a juster appreciation of her high position, as placed in the forefront of the enlightenment, the civilisation, and the onward progress of the world.

These pages are penned in no spirit of captious criticism, but with an earnest hope that the lessons taught us by past shortcomings, may be fruitful in brighter success in the Future.

LONDON
PRINTED BY SPOTTISWOODE AND CO.
NEW-STREET SQUARE

39 Paternoster Row, E.C.
London: *January* 1867.

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